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SPECIAL ISSUE

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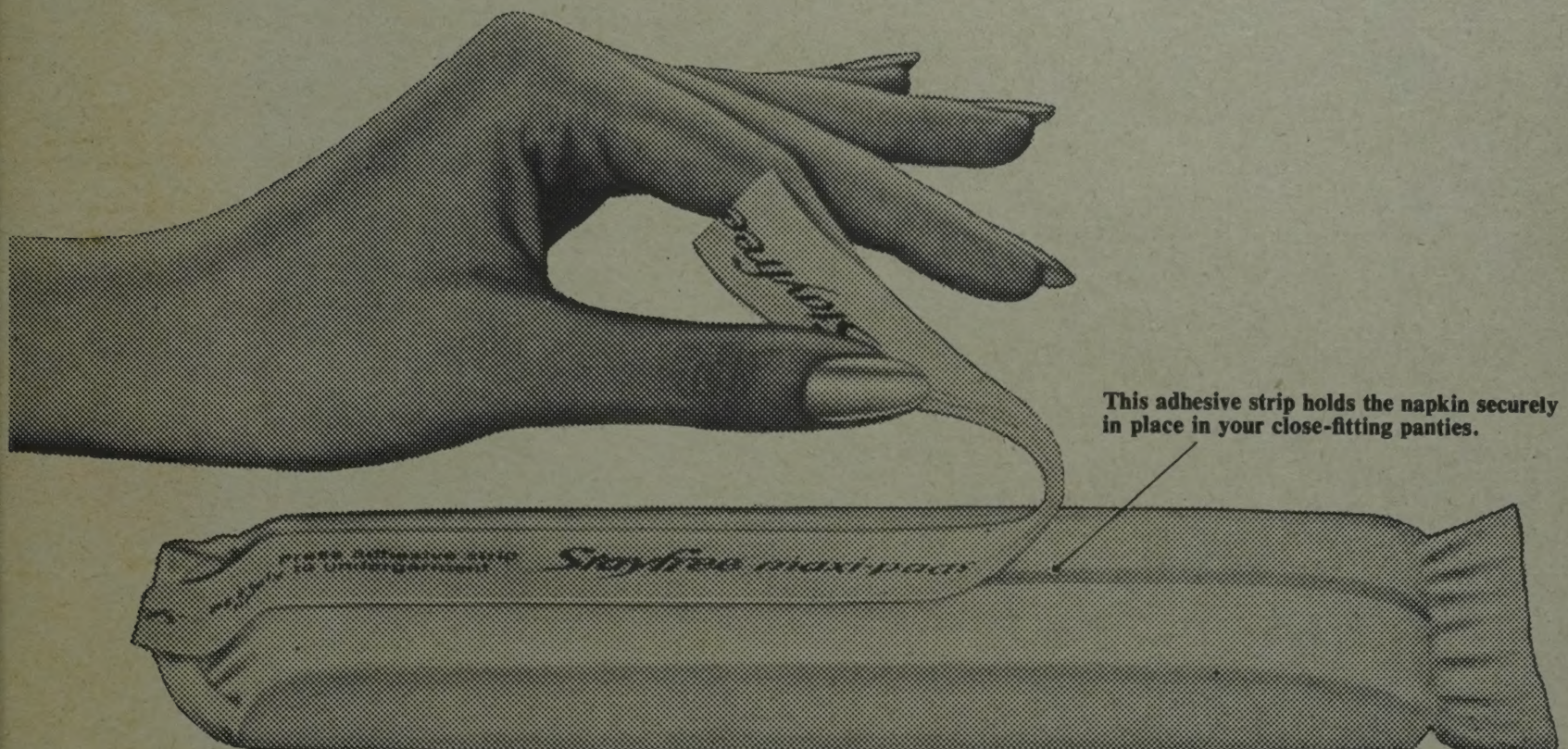

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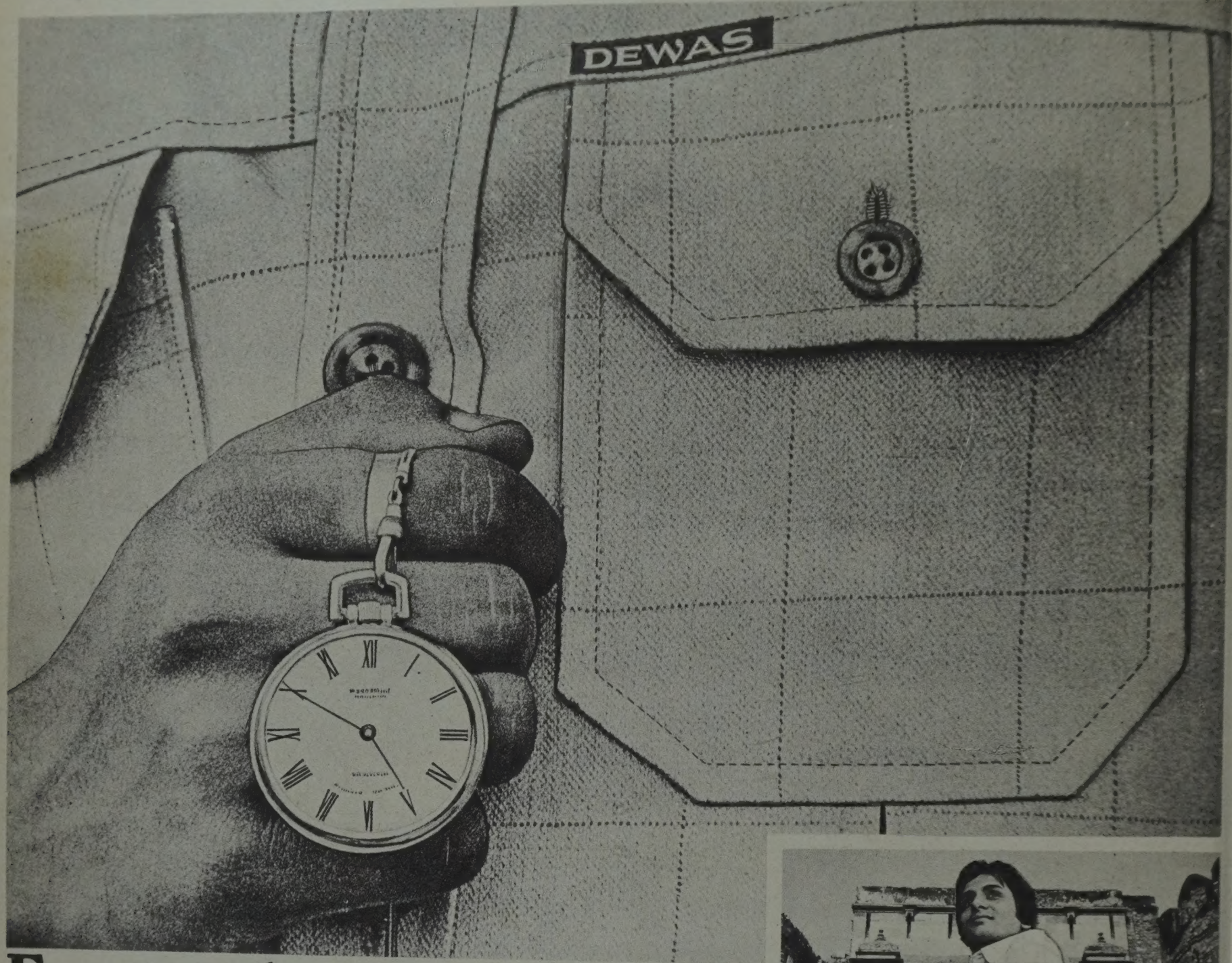

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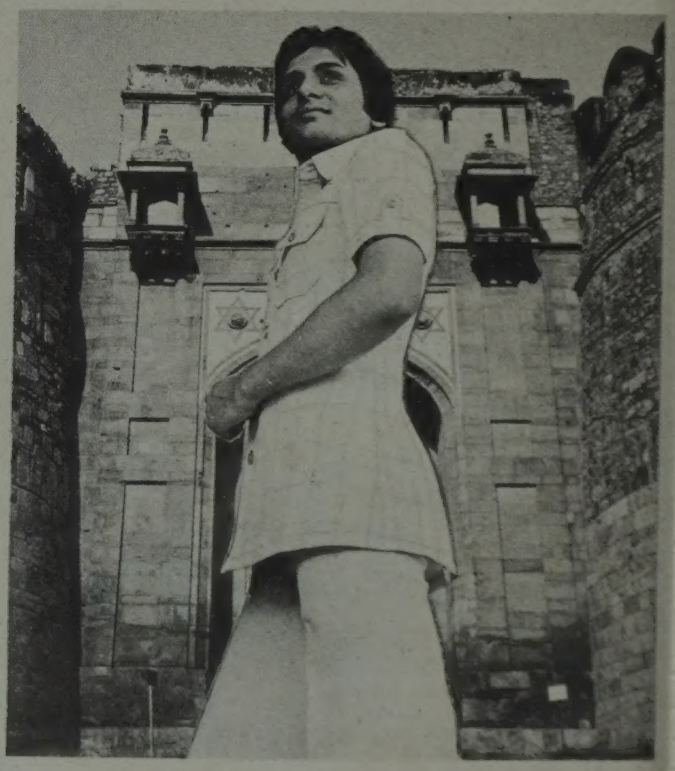

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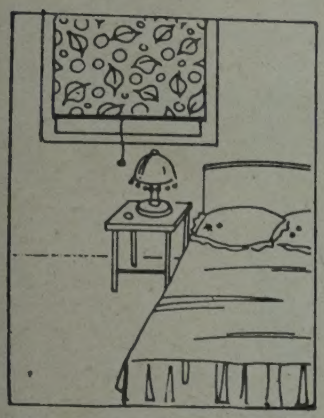

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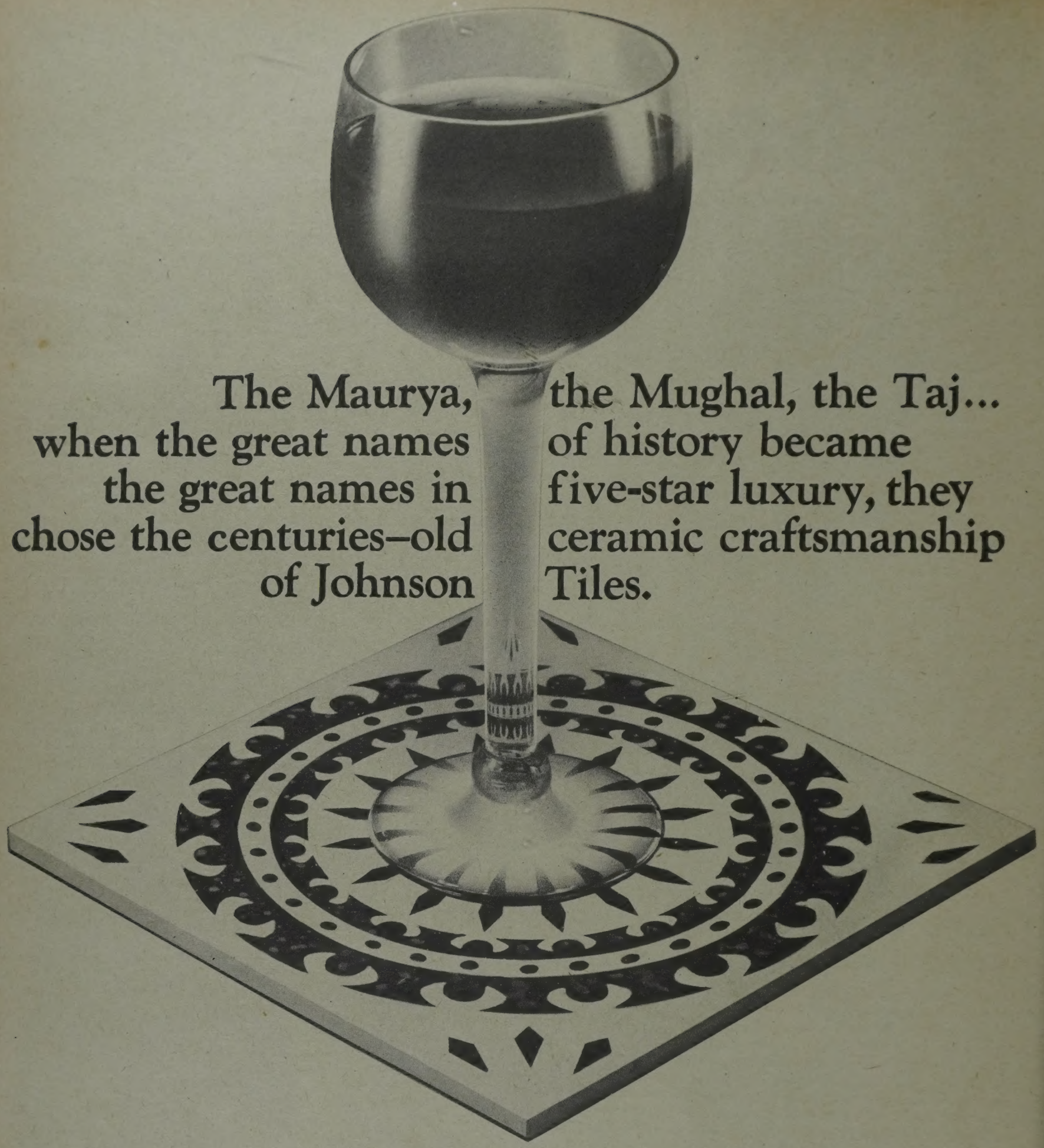

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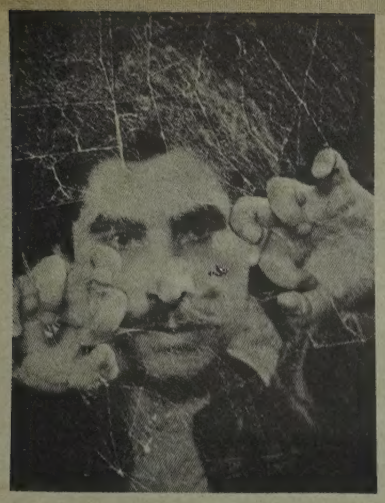

FINDING THE WAY

Brush those cobwebs aside, young man. Can't see the wood for the trees? Peer hard. If you've got blinkers on, don't be afraid to take them off. . . Men seem to be surrounded by the ghosts of custom and tradition — sometimes, we think, much more so than women. There are do's and dont's, things a man should or should not do. There are too many myths, but only one reality: that man, too, is chained to his traditional image and is not free to choose. . . his thoughts, his yearnings, his life style. The cobwebs enmeshing his thinking must be swept away. He must be liberated, for then, alone, will there be a balanced equation so necessary for all human relationships.

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A little over a decade ago, the Women's Movement began making sufficient noises to startle the placid (and callous) world of men. Many were the jokes and snide remarks directed at Women's Lib — and when the feminists declared that women's liberation would bring about men's liberation, too, the guffaws became louder. "Yes", they teased, "let's have men's liberation — we are all hen-pecked, the women rule us." Little did they realize that they were, indeed, in societal strait-jackets and were constantly controlled and beleaguered by strangulating stereotypes. They talked about, and consciously nurtured, the traditional image of women, blissfully unaware that there existed a traditional image of men and their role in society. And so, the stereotypes proliferated like vicious weeds: men must be breadwinners, the brave ones, the protectors; they must be virile, prove their sexual prowess; men must not cry, they must be strong, dominating, aggressive — all this, whether they liked it or not; whether they agreed or not.

And, of course, it started way, way back — a sinister bit of typecasting: little boys and little girls were brought up differently. "Go play with your guns and tanks, or you'll grow up sissy." "Bow and curtsy and make tea for your dolls, or you'll grow up a tomboy." The die is cast. The fetters are forged. In a male-dominated society, the woman learned to bend with the wind; but the presssures heaped on man were colossal. He just had to be a "super male", so he became one, willy-nilly. The media took over and perpetuated the legend through advertising, through cinema. He had to be the "desired" (desired by whom?) male: tall, brawny, and virile. He had to have the longest penis, the hairiest chest — and the biggest ego. And underneath all this, he became (much like Alice) "insecurer and insecurer", too bewildered to protest, too rigid to unbend.

The Women's Movement helped women examine their own sexuality, their needs, their urges. Men, brought up to reign supreme, felt no such need. The result has been a chaotic, unsatisfactory sex-life-style that finds an even more unsatisfactory outlet in porno literature, girlie magazines, cabaret acts and clandestine brothels.

Oh, yes, men need liberation, too — make no mistake about it. They just can't be strong and dominating and breadwinning, all the time. Contrary to male notions, the Women's Movement is not a power struggle. The ultimate objective of the movement is to strive for a life free of stereotypes and other injustices for all human beings — from this will emerge the emancipation of women, the liberation of men...

VIEWS FROM THE TOP

THE HE-MAN

Some famous personalities speak to SUCHITA MAZUMDAR on men and men's liberation. Men are being forced to accept their true characters, they say

ALYQUE PADAMSEE

Director, Theatre Group; Creative Director, Lintas India Pvt. Ltd.

A departure. Only slight, but interesting. Unexpected.

"Women are more aggressive than men in their relations with others, especially with other women — the ill-treatment doled out by mothers-in-law, and so on. . . largely results of conservatism.

"Men are less given to tradition. I don't agree that they are or can be 'he-men' but what they can do is change. Women change less easily. But unless both change, how can they be free from the hypocritical past that our culture forces us to carry with us? We carry with us 3000 years of conservative culture, values that generally force us to be hypocrites.

"Men at home are the heroes. Then they go to a lover. . . what is such a man? He may imagine he is a 'he-man' but not in my book.

"I believe everyone is a human being first. Normally people do behave equally. . . it's mainly in sexual matters that there is so much hypocrisy. Men do cry, weep, shout, behave irrationlly as much as women. So called 'male' qualities are myths. They may, however, be deliberately cultivated in boys because of social pressures, because it must be so. But it's generally a facade. Just as it's not true that women's biological needs are satisfied necessarily by only one man.

"Men are being forced to accept their true characters. Just as women are claiming to show their true characters. Today Parveen Babi, Rekha, Protima Bedi can be open about themselves, about their sexual behaviour. . . it's a challenge to Indira Gandhi's hypocrisy, wearing her sari pullav draped modestly over her head when visiting a village and proudly aside when abroad. . .

"If women achieve the full stature of their personalities, the super stature of 'he-man' will crumble automatically. If they are to develop constantly as human beings they must be partners. And that can be only if they are equal. Men are not as resentful of women's growing stature as women — the traditional women — are themselves."

KAMLESHWAR

Editor "Kathayatra"; Script Writer; TV Personality

He was derisive, tongue-in-cheek, caustic and firm in the belief that it is the upper class that promotes "the myths of he-men and she-women." He laughed appreciatively at the words. ". . .He-men and she-women means the women are doll-like and the 'he-men' suave inscrutable of face and all that. . ." A smile.

"Of course there is nothing like a he-man or a she-woman except artificial products. A genuine living human being has qualities of. . . well. . . what you said. . . emotions, sentiments. . . is warm, cold, thoughtful, thoughtless. But the so-called 'manly' and 'womanly' qualities our rich men propagate are their own evaluations. They instil these supposedly 'manly' traits — 'don't cry, it's not manly'; 'don't flinch with pain, it's not manly' etc. — into little boys and likewise some 'womanly' ones into girls, the end-result is a doll and a. . . well, actually even the men would be

SHARAYU DAFTARY

Director, Bharat Radiators Pvt. Ltd; member of the executive committees of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce (FICCI), the Maharashtra Chamber of Commerce (MCC) and the Indian Merchants Chamber (IMC)

"There is nothing like the 'male image'. I don't think men have any image of being strong, silent heroes, 'he-men'. I've known very soft, tender-hearted sentimental men. . . known men to break down easily. And I've also known women who are so coldly calculating, bold and ruthless even. . ." Sharayu Daftary stopped.

"You know," she went on reflectively, "I think men and women have both male and female qualities in them. In some, either a man or a woman, the male qualities predominate, in others the female."

What are male qualities? She smiled. That was a bit of a slip "Well, male qualities," — there was a slight question mark and derision in her voice — "are supposed to be strength, lack of emotion and so on. Not, as I said earlier, that men live up to such qualities. It is both unfair and ridiculous to think of anyone having only so-called male or female qualities. We are basically human being and as I said we have all or any of these qualities mixed in each person. . . some qualities dominate."

"But man as a breadwinner, yes, that is a commonly projected image of a man. . . but that's because of tradition. Partly it is justifiable because in the primitive days men hunted. Women worked in fields, in houses and all that, yes, but were physically less adventurous than men. . ."

Her voice, which had trailed away, perked up, "Today things are different because we are civilised. Women can if they like work. The man as breadwinner is a continuing image only because most women in India don't work. More and more women are working, but not enough."

In one important area, Sharayu Daftary, perhaps on accont of her own experience, differed with general opinion: "Professionally or in jobs a woman is not discriminated against if she can show her sincerity to work, her ability, knowledge, and intelligence. . . In the name of 'protection', of 'looking after', men tend to curb women. 'Security' becomes a gilded cage. . . men as 'protectors', is a negative image but I really think women are more responsible for allowing this sort of an image to exist. If a woman is confident of herself as a person or as a woman, a man automatically becomes a person too, to her personally and therefore socially. I think women must be made aware of their responsibility to themselves and, in this generation, especially in educating their daughters. . . Only in this way can humans be allowed to forget 'male' and 'female' qualities and become persons who happen to be male or female."

IS CRUMBLING

PILOO WADIA
Actress

"Men are superior physically and they can be less inhibited than women in their social habits, physical movements. . . so it's natural for them to become more. . . more. . . dashing," She said it with an emphatic wave of her hand.

"They go out more often and more freely, travel more. . . but this, generally speaking."

She pursed up her lips and said, "Women can have as much claim to some of these dashing qualities of men as men themselves. They can be equally adventurous, equally bold. . ."

The psyche? What of emotions? Are men less emotional, strong, stiff-upper-lipped and all that? "Well yes. Women are, in India at least, more feminine. They may be very hard-headed but generally also soft-hearted. And they aren't afraid to show their feelings. Men are. . . well . . .less inhibited, yes, in physical matters, but very inhibited in emotional matters. But," she veered around unexpectedly, "it's because women idolise men or depend on men that men become so. . . so perfect in their behaviour. It's a kind of imperfect perfection, has its good and bad sides. The good is obvious, the bad is that they can become emotionally stunted."

But a woman today requires man to be "somewhat aggressive". They expect men to be physical in their approach to women. "Unless a man makes it clear that he finds a woman sexually desirable, her confidence in herself may suffer. It's very rarely that a man is attracted to an intellectual woman."

Isn't man the loser then? This overwhelming emphasis on the physical can mean he is mentally and emotionally underdeveloped.

Mrs. Wadia smiled. "You could be right." A minute or two later she continued, "Some of the world's greatest artists, however, have been men. That may be because not too many women are given the opportunity to demonstrate their abilities. But I firmly believe that women with real ability can always gain recognition. However. . . in this field itself you can find the best in men. In giving due recognition to those who have had a hard fight they are both terribly hard-headed and kind," she prolonged the last word with a smile.

"More women should be given education and employment. Women, without losing their feminity, should be what men in general are allowed to be — hard-headed, bold and emotionally controlled — allowed by women, of course. Why should it be left only to the man to earn to support his family? It gives him the power to take all decisions for the family. And he suffers also in the process. He is the outsider in the family circle — the breadwinner and the head. How often do they think of him as a lovable papa? So he suffers too."

doll-like in the sense of artificiality, but being economically and socially both active and productive, they just miss being dolls."

He sneezed and snorted. Then, "Indian men are taught from infancy to make women feel small. And from that he himself gathers feelings of superiority. This process is obviously inhuman — to gain your confidence from suppressing another. It is bullying, isn't it — socialised bullying. But I talk of the rich, propertied classes only. Among the working classes it's different. Both men and women are tough, both men and women are full-blooded, feeling people and both men and women generally earn.

"Actually," he went on speculatively, "the worst-affected are the middle classes. Among the rich, though the women suffer, they also enjoy being coddled and dolled up — in fact, they not only encourage, they insist on a certain type of behaviour from their men — that of the 'he-man' who will treat them like dolls! But the man gives prestige to his wife only to take it away from five other women.

"Now, coming back to the middle classes. . . the man continues to be a bully, to imagine himself a 'he-man', the supporter, economically, and the decision-maker, in all matters. But the woman can't be coddled — they don't have the means. So. . .

"Everywhere there is this artificial dichotomy of psychology and intelligence simply because of physical differentiation; there will be misery like this."

He forwarded, "The only solution to this is greater industrialisation. Let men and women both work together and not only will woman's independence uplift her, it will also put the man's feet back on the ground. They will learn more about each other and so about themselves. . . but never depend on 'lib' movements to achieve this."

BALWANT A. DESAI
MLA; Vice-President, Bombay Janata Party; Senior Counsel, Bombay High Court

Working class men are more free from preconceptions about themselves than the men in the families of rich industrialists or other very upper or upper middle-class families. This is basically because of the economic conditions of the different sections."

"In the upper classes, men are allowed to dominate. Upper-class women are like 'dolls'," he said, "and very uninteresting. They agree to the restrictions placed on them by social conditioning and the standards and behaviour patterns set in this largely male-dominated world, and they follow these restrictions obediently.

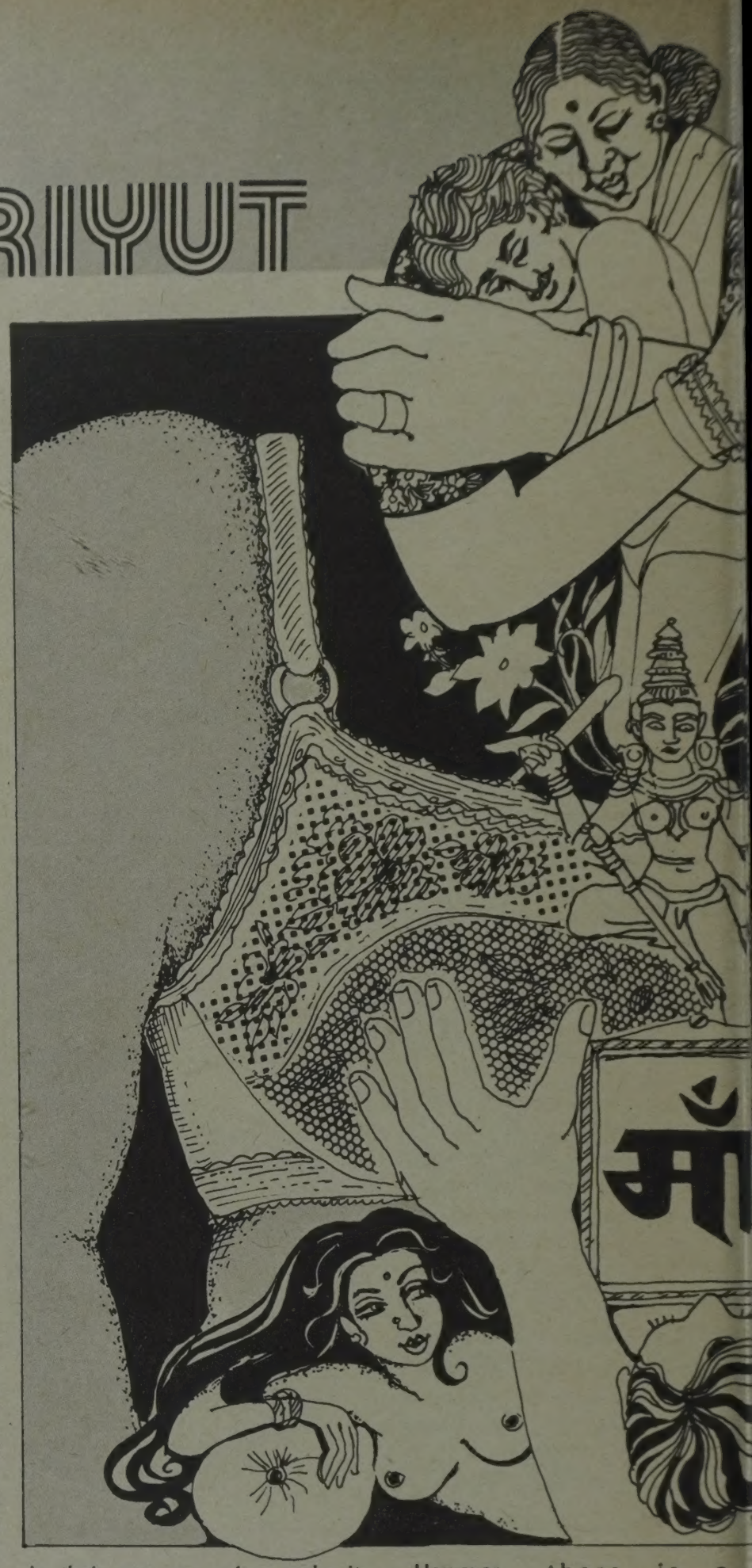
"It is the system that is responsible. The system that started with private property — that, by and large, encouraged a paternalistic society — made men the 'heroes'. It's almost equal to theories of racial superiority which we know are false. So we are really victims of ignorance if we continue to believe that men are 'heroes'. . ." He paused, thought, and continued, "Maybe in the future it will not be so.

"The most secure and only way to overcome such fallacious beliefs," Balwant Desai continued, "is granting freedom to a woman — not just sexual equality. Sexual freedom is only a part of her right to an equal status with men. But so long as the system of private property with its attendent commercialization of everything — every human being sold and bought; emotions, sentiments put up for sale. . . the nature of today's advertisements — as long as these continue, even a woman's sexual freedom will become a commodity.

"Even men's supposed 'heroic qualities have become a commodity — James Bond, all the Chase books — and this is ignorance of a terribly degenerate type. It's primitive and since through education, books, films etc. we continue to promote this, we are building generations of men who learn that 'the male is a hero; the woman is a doll' and in the process never explore fully all they are themselves capable of. Besides which it is a terrible waste of human energy. . . of men and of women. . ."

Continued on page 55

THE SHRIYUT



There is a "momma" complex which besets the Indian male throughout his life. The irrepressible KHUSHWANT SINGH rips off the lid from this mother-fixation to reveal the Indian mother's role in destroying her son as a lover and a husband

Upendra Nath Ashk, the well-known Hindi-Urdu writer, has a short story entitled **Palang** (The Bed). It tells of a young man deeply devoted to his mother whom he loves and worships almost as a goddess. Like most Indians, he entrusts his mother with finding him a suitable bride. The mother finds him an attractive young girl whose ample figure holds promise of healthy offspring. The bridegroom, who had looked forward to the day, finds himself incapable of consummating the union. This goes on night after night till the young man is driven to desparation. He is not impotent, his bride is more than willing and yet he cannot make it. After trying everything else, he sticks his mother's picture on the head rest of his bed and while fondly gazing on his **mataji's** features succesfully deflowers his all-too expectant wife.

The story is an obvious take-off of the oedipus complex, a transparent exaggeration of an Indian's mother-fixation salaciously served up on a nuptial bed. But it does have the sub-stratum of truth. Neither in fact nor in Indian fiction have I come across stories based on a daughter's father-fixation (electra complex), where a girl's adoration for her father goes beyond highlighting her husband's shortcomings vis-a-vis her sire and expressing itself in sexual fantasies with her begetter. But there are innumerable cases where such fantasies exist in a son's mind for his mother. And are obviously generated by the mother herself.

Nowhere else in the world does the daughter-in-law/mother-in-law syndrome manifest itself as blatantly and often with tragic consequences as it does in India. Because nowhere else except in India does a mother play as decisive a role in choosing her son's bed-mate, then challenge that bed-mate's right to the love of her lover-husband, seek to regulate her relations with her son including the intimately sexual; belittle her, torture her and sometimes drive her to dowse her sari with kerosene oil and put a lighted match to it.

No men are more parent-ridden then the Indians. The combination of awe and respect in which they hold their begetters, the formality they observe when in their presence, often make it difficult to detect love in the relationship. Even a middle-aged Indian male who drinks himself silly every evening and smokes like a chimney will abstain from alcohol and cigarettes when his parents are around; he regards these activities, in his words, as "showing disrespect to elders".

However, there is a clear distinction between the Indian male's relationship to his father and his relationship to his mother. This can be summed up in an old Hindi adage: Mother is divinity, father is a treasure. One could rephrase the adage in more earthy terms: mother gives you love,

AND HIS MATAJI

father gives you money. The former appeals to emotional insecurity, the latter to material insecurity. An indigent father does not get (nor deserves to get) either respect or affection. A moneyed father will get both as long as he is solvent and holds promise of leaving something behind. And as soon as he is gone, the son comes into his own. He pays nominal homage to his departed sire by putting garlands round his portrait and burning agarbattis at its frame. As a matter of fact the death of a father is release of the son from bondage; it is only after the event that he matures from his prolonged adolescence into manhood. Koestler described Hindu society as a **Bapucracy** and remarked that the Indian male was emotionally warped because the father's baleful shadow did not allow the sapling's healthy growth. And by the time that shadow was removed, he was too old to grow any further.

It is different with the mother. She has seldom anything more than love to give to her children. Usually Indian daughters are closer than the sons to their mothers. But the daughter-mother equation, being in its very nature platonic, does not have the Freudian overtones of sex that adds an extra dimension to the son-mother relationship.

The Momma complex is by means a phenomenon unique to Indian society; only its prolongation into middle and old age is more evident in India than elsewhere. To start with, the mother has closer physical intimacy with her offspring than the father. The intimacy lasts much longer here than in advanced societies. In the West, children, if breast-fed at all, are usually weaned before they are six months old. In India, a child (especially if it is a male) will be given suck till the second one is well on the way to being born. Breast-feeding two-year-old males is not uncommon. In India, more than in any other country, one can say that a mother is her son's best bosom friend. The Momma complex in the male child develops into the mammary complex in the male adult. It will be noticed that Indians have a very enlarged bosom-fixation.

The mother-son relationship continues on its intimate level into adolescence. In the West, fathers often share in the task of bathing their offspring. In India, never. It is the mother who will continue to wash and cleanse her son. And this is most conveniently done when she is bathing and cleansing herself. Of the West, it is said that 'it is a wise child who knows its own mother in a bathing suit'. An Indian child has the physical details of his mother imprinted on its mind for it sees her stark naked at least once a day for the first six or seven years of its life. He becomes familiar with menstrual cycles and visible signs (scratches, bites, etc) left on her person by her husband. He may not understand these phenomenon at the time, but they get stored up in his memory for elucidation in later years. The impact of the mother's torso persists through adolescence into maturity.

The King named Oedipus Rex

Who started this fuss about sex;

Put the world to great pains

By the spots and the stains

Which he made in mother's pubex.

Make any sample survey of the Indian male and you will find that the incidence of impotence, homosexual tendencies and broken marriages will be the highest amongst those who were the favourite sons of their mothers.

We Indians have a habit of camouflaging irregular relationships. Thus, many a pious Sriyut, who gets attracted to a woman other than his wife, will proceed to invest her with a relationship without which intimacy is prohibited. If she happens to be older than himself, he will address her **mataji;** if of the same age or a little younger, he will call her his **behanji** or **choti behan;** and if the object of his passion is a nymphet, she will become "like my own **beti'**. Thereafter he will proceed to indulge in these self-confessed incestuous relationships fooling only himself that he is fooling the world. It becomes more difficult to camouflage attachment to his real mother. He cannot give her a spurious designation. And since the affair is not intended to be physical, the emotional involvement finds expression in defying her and identifying her with some goddess or other. Thus in the **Rig Veda,** Saraswati becomes the mother-figure: "Motherhest of mothers, noblest of rivers, godhest of goddesses, we who are of no repute, give us high renown." Even the great thinker theologian, Adi Sankaracharya, exulted in mother-worship: 'auspicious mother-goddess who uplifts all, forgive our shortcomings! A bad son may be born, but there is no bad mother. O, Ocean of compassion, I think of you only when I am immersed in calamities. Do not take it a roguery on my part. Only when hungry or thirsty do children think of their mother.'

It is not surprising that in the present day pantheon of Hindu dieties, worshippers of the mother (as Durga, Kali, Parvati, Saraswati, Naina Devi or Chandi) are increasing while those of the trinity of Brahma, Vishnu and Siva are decreasing in numbers. The mother-goddess like the mother in real life is invested with both creative and destructive faculties. It seldom occurs to the Indian male that while his mother did certainly play her part in him, she also makes him less manly in his dealings with other women and often destroys him as a lover and a husband.

THE NEED FOR
MEN'S LIBERATION

Razia Ismail

The male, around whom all his women revolve in worshipful orbit, is brought up to be a potential monster. It is clear that anyone imprisoned in a stereotype deserves to be liberated

Ours is a country where women have for centuries been second class citizens. Even today, few women have broken away from the image to which Society still decrees they should conform. Enlightened Indian men like Raja Ram Mohun Roy and Dr. Karve were the first crusaders against this unjust stereotyping, but most Indian men do not seem worried by the persistent inequality of status. If they do not overtly bask in their preferential status, they do take it for granted. The question is — is that healthy for them?

Status stereotypes men as much as it does women. They too have come down the centuries trapped in another, equally inflexible, box. Are they happy in there? Has society given them a fair deal? In theory, anyone imprisoned in a stereotype deserves to be liberated. In actual fact, men need to be emancipated from this kind of forcible socio-cultural type-casting for a variety of reasons — not the least of which is that they run the risk of being dehumanised by staying within its confines.

The two traditional images are, of course, inter-dependent. On the one hand, the gentle, solicitous, submissive female, whose only wish is to serve, and whose joy hinges on seeing her sons grow up big and strong. On the other hand, the strong and masterful male, in charge and in control, around whom the hopes and joys of mother, sister, and wife revolve in worshipful orbit. If a woman does not fit the image, she is 'bold' and 'bad' and non-conformist in the worst sense. If a man does not fit his assigned image, he is a failure. Chances are that his womenfolk will coddle him even more, to compensate. Or, he may go through life thinking of himself as inadequate, whereas he may actually be quite adequate — a good man, a sound citizen, a person well able to cope with life outside the confining box. Does he not deserve to be freed from this unfairly confining image of what he ought to be? And if he does, where must the process of liberation begin?

The eternal breadwinner! Must it be always the man who is seen off to work? This is forced type-casting.

Sons vs daughters — the brainwashing begins early with pistols for him and dolls for her... period.

Obviously it must begin at birth. It must begin with the prevailing attitudes of our society towards sons versus daughters. And that is where it will immediately clash with customs and time-honoured convictions. Look at the joy with which the birth of a son is greeted. Look at the wealth of folk songs, and traditional practices that celebrate a boy's birth and infancy. Think of the tears and glum faces that generally greet the arrival of a daughter. In home after home, across the country, the son is the focus of attention. From the moment of birth he is at the receiving end of a kind of pampering, suffocating affection and care that does absolutely nothing to make him grow up to be a decent human being. From the time that he is old enough to preceive anything, he perceives that the best that his family has to offer is his by right—all of it. What a strange preparation for the role of husband, father, breadwinner and mature citizen!

But that is the way it goes. Elder sisters are encouraged to join in caring for him. Little sisters are neglected in his favour. He goes to school in the best clothes the family can afford, often bought with carefully saved money. If his sisters ever go, they drop out soon enough. It doesn't really matter if they are brighter than their brother. If the parents give this factor no weight, why should the son stop to think about it?

Even while they are at school, girls shuttle busily between classroom work and household duties. Boys are helped with their books if possible, encouraged to study hard. They may be happily reading, or playing games, while their sisters toil. What of the boys who work, who do not manage to stay in the school stream? Early in life they are taught how valuable they are to the family, how they must behave like "little men". Daughters who work are not valuable — they are merely earning their own keep until they can be married off!

Harking back to the moment of birth, baby girls are potentially hardier than boys, but after the first week of life their mortality soars above that of boys — and stays higher. Why? Do they fall sick more easily? They are simply not tended as well. In the children's wards of general hospitals, boys vastly outnumber girls. Why? Is it they who fall sick more easily? No, it is just that they are brought for treatment; girls are not.

It is clear that the situation is unfair to the girl. But is it fair to the boy? What is he brought up to be? The apple of his parents' eye — and a potential monster.

In the course of my work, I come across a lot of reports and pictures portraying children in appalling conditions. I have never come across any that are more chilling than a set of unforgettable portraits of a smiling young woman and her three children — two sons and a daughter. The woman was referred to a nutrition rehabilitation centre because her daughter was dying of starvation. She brought her two sons along. One of them was about 12 years old, the other was a year old — and the twin of the little girl. There was nothing wrong with the mother's nutritional condition; both sons were sturdy and healthy; the daughter was a huge-eyed skeletal travesty of a child. She was simply not being fed. The mother and children were photographed in various poses (see picture on page 67). The woman and her bigger son held the two babies obligingly, and cheerfully. Some food was offered to the woman — and she offered it to the healthy male twin while the girl twin watched. It took some time for her to realise what her ingrained attitudes had already done to her innocent daughter. She may never realise what damage has been done to the older son. One could ask of him: did he love his sister? What could he answer? Would he ever look back on the day the family went to the rehabilitation centre? What would he feel? The most ominous element in the small quartet of photographs remains the cheerful face of the elder son.

That boy's parents must have made a sincere effort to teach him the difference between right and wrong. But he could not recognise it within his own home. That is one index of the kind of socialisation an Indian son can receive from his family. How different the results might be if he — and others like him — could be liberated from the dubious benefits of the very customs that accord them such importance.

This is one aspect of the case for men's liberation. There is another side to it as well. As time passes and the son grows toward adulthood, more and more emphasis is laid on his capacity to make his parents' dreams come

Continued on page 67

Real talent, hidden urges are often repressed by confining structures. Classical dancing for boys has been derided since — and despite — Uday Shankar. Why this uncalled-for restriction on a man?

Men must not cry — but who says so? Another of those 'strait-jackets' planted on the male.

Photographs : Farokh Reporter

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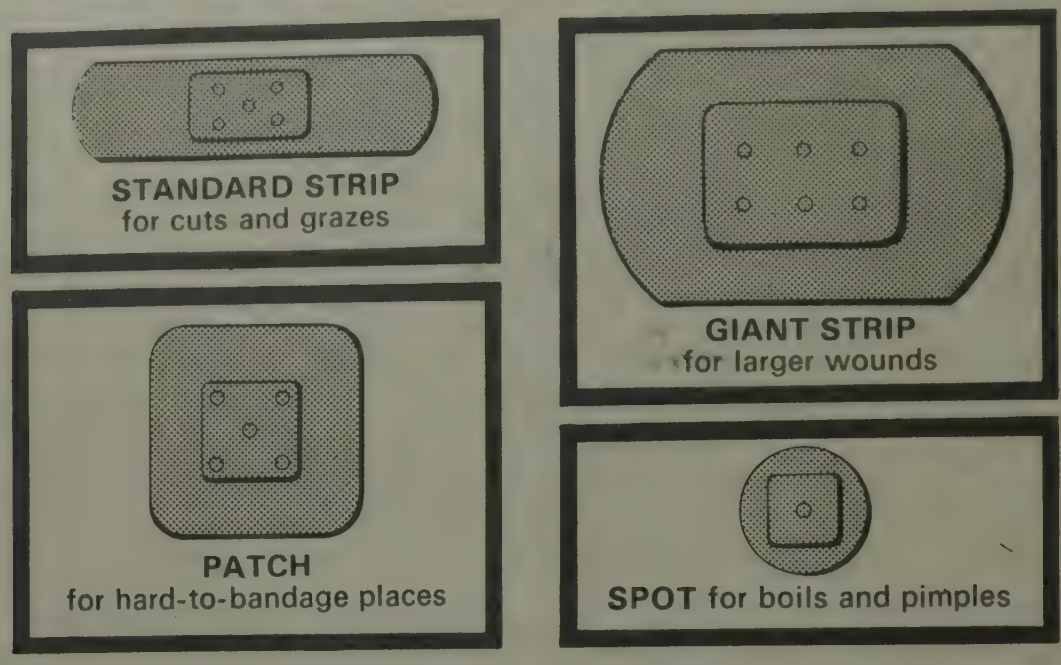

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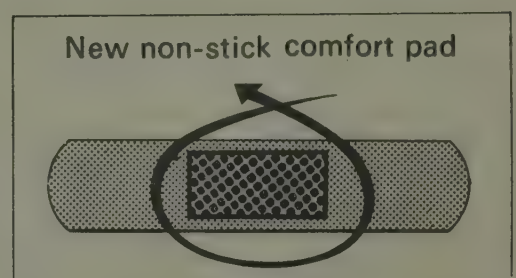

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The Indian Male In Folklore

THE HERO IN OUR FOLK LEGENDS WAS ALWAYS THE BRAVE WARRIOR, THE PRESERVER OF 'DHARMA', THE RULER OF HIS PEOPLE — BUT IT WAS THE WOMEN WHO EMERGED AS THE STRONGER FIGURES, FULL OF VITALITY AND COMPLEXITIES

Saraswati Swaminathan

The folklore of any country is inextricably bound with the classical literature of the region. A popular belief or tale of the people can be developed into a classic by a master playwright or poet; or, a classical work can be widely accepted by the people and emerge as a folk legend.

One of the myths, as regards the classical and folk literature of India, is that they are largely male-oriented, or that they are tales of heroes, full of vitality and courage.

The writers of these ancient tales were influenced by the philosophical and religious ideologies which were widely prevalent during that period. Woman, in the form of Amba or Shakti, had an important place in the religion of the people. Mother Earth had a tremendous importance in the life of the village-dwellers.

According to Samkhya philosophy, Purusha is the unmoved Mover of the Universe. Without Purusha there can be no movement, although Purusha itself remains outside the bondage. Prakriti is the force of creation which attempts to bind the Purusha with the three gunas or qualities — **sattva, rajas** and **tamas.**

In the Advaita vedanta philosophy of Sankara too, Brahman itself has no motion, no creation. Everything which exists is due to the activity of maya or illusion. Activity is therefore traditionally attributed to the feminine influence.

The central figure around whom the story is constructed, whether it is a classical poem or play or a folk legend, is usually a man. But the hero is merely endowed with stock good qualities, such as "a brave warrior, the preserver of **dharma,** the ruler of his people, a lover of the arts," etc. If we analyse the details of these stories, the images of the women in them emerge as the stronger ones, full of vitality and complexities.

The legendary hero usually proves to be a decorative pivot around whom the dramatic conflict is built, but the conflict is aroused and sustained by the women, whose multi-dimensional personalities create definite characterisations.

In **Silappadikaram,** the Tamil classic, Kovalan is the passive hero who is married to Kannagi, but is in love with Madhavi, a courtesan. The drama is created by the conflicting interests of Kannagi and Madhavi in whose hands Kovalan becomes a pawn. In **Vikramorvasiyam,** King Pururava is described as a great man of valour, but the fate of his love lies in the hands of Urvashi, the divine courtesan and the queen of Pururava.

The traditional Indian work of dramaturgy, Bharata's **Natya Shastra** and the subsequent works such as **Dasarupaka** and **Natya Darpana** discuss in great detail the different classification of the **nayikas** or the heroines, but do not pay the same importance to the classification of heroes or **nayaka-bheda.** The culmination of **nayika-bheda** is found in **Rasamanjari** of Bhanudatta. in which heroines are classified into 1,152 categories.

This shows about the almost uniformly monotonous nature of the heroes of all traditional, classical, as well as folk, literature. In most cases the central characters are romantic heroes, perhaps due to the influence of the Krishna cult on our literature. Lalita or sportiveness seems to be the main quality of nayaka, which includes "natural, innocent expressions of love such as sidelong glances, striking speeches, self-decorations.

The combination of male and female qualities, especially in men, may seem strange in modern times. But during the ancient times, in both Saivism as well as Vaishnavism, this concept of manliness was accepted. One of the forms of Lord Siva is Ardhanariswara, in which half the form of god is male and the other is female. In Vaishnavism, Vishnu himself is said to have taken the form of Mohini to entice the asuras and defeat them.

The main prowess of the classical heroes was often only the conquest of women, which was done in a very coy manner. In Kalidasa's **Abhigyana Shakuntalam,** King Dushyanta loses weight in his passion for Shakuntala. He describes his own fate thus :

"I certainly am becoming thin from want of sleep:

As night by night in anxious thought I raise,

Vishnu as Mohini which form he takes to entice the asuras.

Krishna riding a composite horse of gopis.

This wasted arm to rest my sleepless head,

My jewelled bracelet, sullied by the tears

That trickle from my eyes in scalding streams,

Slips towards my elbow from my shrivelled wrist,

Off I replace the bauble, but in vain."

Dushyanta feels the pangs of love and speaks of Kama, the God of Love:

"But on our fevered frames the moonbeams fall

Like darts of fire, every flower tipt shaft

Of Kama, as it probes our throbbing hearts,

Seems to be barbed with hardest adamant."

Yet, when Shakuntala comes to the court of King Dushyanta, she is rejected by him. Kalidasa introduces a curse which is an eternal contrivance, to explain the King's forgetfulness, but does that also excuse Dushyanta's lack of a gentleman's gracious behaviour?

It is the same question which can be asked in **Nalavilasa,** written by Ramachandra. King Nala falls in love with princess Damayanti and marries her. Nala loses his kingdom through gambling and has to leave his kingdom with his wife. At night when Damayanti is asleep, Nala leaves her to fend for herself and runs

Continued on page 54

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BRINGING UP FATHER

Govind Shahani

Traditionally, it has been the woman's domain to bring up the children and men have, by and large, remained indifferent to their duties as fathers — other than "paying the way". Now, however, more and more young fathers are establishing a direct rapport with their children

Does the responsibility of men to their children extend beyond the dutiful handing of the pay-packet to their wives? Do they take their role as fathers seriously or do they abandon their responsibility of parenthood to their wives with an it's-your-baby attitude? Interviewing a number of fathers, mothers and their children, one has to make a number of generalizations which may be hazardous and yet inescapable if one looks at the dominant trends. Traditionally, men have considered it unmanly to involve themselves in the bringing up of their children. They have often found themselves at a distance from their offspring while it is their wives who have to fulfil the needs of their children — both physical and emotional.

How do men react to the changing situation today — when man is no longer the sole breadwinner, and when both men and women work? It seems axiomatic that when women work in the world outside, men must work within the home as well and be involved with their children. Have men discarded today the traditional role that they have played in the past?

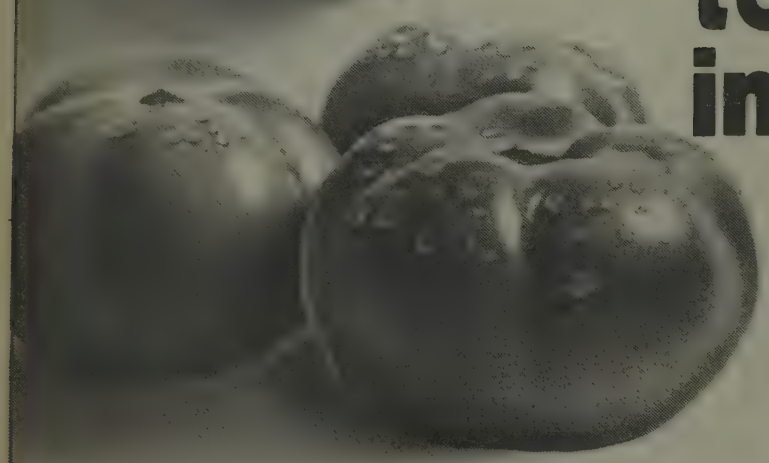
Not always. K, for example, is a working woman. In spite of her eight-hour schedule at the office, she runs her home without a helping hand from her husband. She must run to the doctor, in case of an illness, or to the school when there is a problem that the son's class teacher wishes to discuss. K's working day has been long since her marriage and her temper short.

Inconsiderate husbands like those of K are inconsiderate fathers as well. And there are many like him who, in spite of the pressures of the urban set-up that they live in, have not responded to the demands of the situation. Such fathers have not escaped the conditioning of their own peer group and are too insensitive to be alive to the needs of their children — needs which the mother on her own cannot adequately cope with.

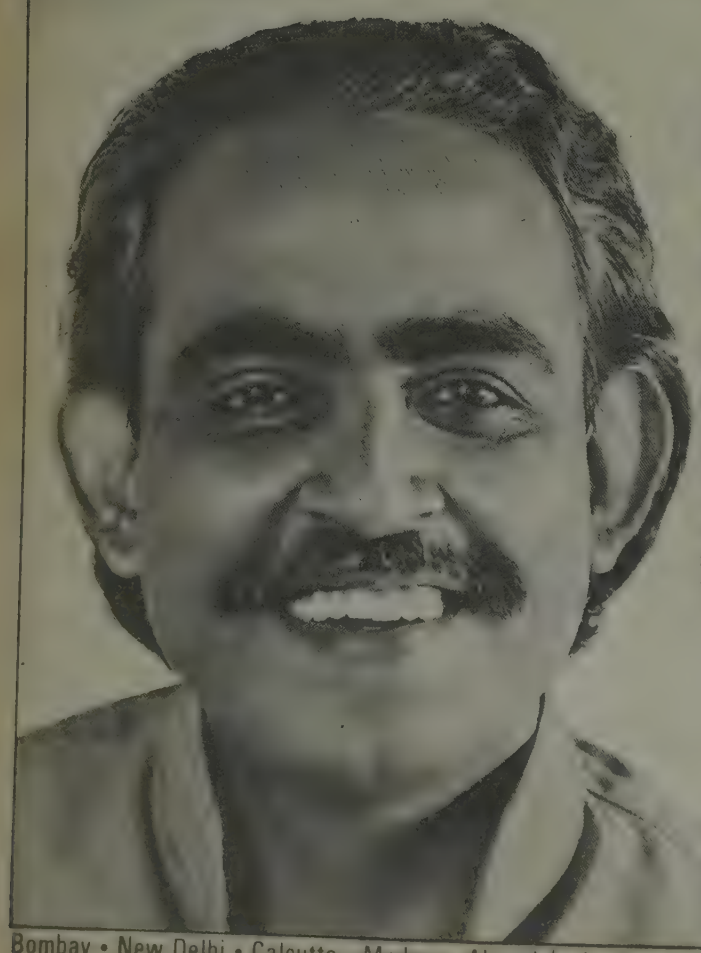
There are considerate fathers who are close to their children, even in otherwise traditional households. However, they are the exceptions; the general rule is that of the husband who refuses to acknowledge his responsibility as father. It was curious to see that the professional classes have a larger number of conscientious fathers than the business classes. Affluence, and the 'sophistication' it brings, rarely leads to progressive attitudes. R is a well-to-do businessman. He rarely spends time with his children, busy as he is, going on his business tours and attending board meetings of his company. It is his wife who minds her children's affairs — that is, when she can find time from her cookery and bonsai classes, her visits to music appreciation clas-

Photograph: Farokh Reporter

Leonard chills coconut water in Colombo



Leonard preserves tomatoes in Trivandrum



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ses and interests which are considered respectable for her class of society!

The situation in the middle classes and working classes can sometimes be happier, though generally it is far from ideal. A father who is a Marxist, while emancipated in his own attitudes, admitted that even socially consicious people, who were involved in workers' movements for example, were not equally conscious of a fair deal to their wives and were not involved with their families. He quoted a well-known Marxist leader who chided his partymen for being "Communists abroad and husbands at home" — presumably having in mind the very conventional husband. He was honest enough to admit that there was a general need for conscious education of fathers and that their own efforts had been inadequate. He pointed out in this context that women in his party had criticized leaders of trade unions for making only wage demands while omitting such demands as creches for working mothers.

Several fathers rationalized their indifference. One father felt that household responsibilities, including the care of children, was a privilege conferred upon women. Others said sentimentally that love alone was what mattered between a father and his children. But did it? Was there not a need to translate that feeling into action? There were other fathers who vaguely talked of division of labour, a division where child-rearing fell in the wife's domain. But could one invoke that in a situation where both husband and wife worked?

However, if there are a large number of unenlightened males, women need not feel smug. A number of women contribute to the alienation of the fathers from their children. When discipline is to be imposed, the father is a bogeyman. A common refrain is "If you don't do this, I'll tell Daddy". Women themselves continue to cling to traditional concepts of what a father's role should be. Such women think it unwifely to allow their husbands to change the baby's diaper, or to let him get up for the night feeds.

There are two prerequisites for change. The need for change and a conscious awareness of the need. In the middle class and the working class, with the growing number of working mothers, the need has arisen for men to share equally in the care of the children. But conscious awareness has come only to a few.

However, there are a number of helpful signs of changing attitudes in the new generation of fathers. A number of fathers in their thirties were proud of the fact that their relationship with their children was an improvement over that of their fathers' with them. They were close to their children and had greater rapport with them. They felt that their relation with their own children was more relaxed and they projected a less pompous image of themselves as fathers. A helpful factor that has contributed to this process is the breaking up of the joint family and the growth of the nuclear family. In the joint family, the traditional concepts of family 'roles' are emphasized and inhibit a man from adopting progressive attitudes. Fathers who helped with the baby were significantly afraid of the criticism of their parents who considered such help a lapse on the part of their daughters-in-law.

There are, on the other hand, fathers who carry their concern for their children to such an extreme degree that they are over-possessive. Many careeristic men fall in this category. Regarding their children as their alter egos, they suffocate their children in their attempt to direct their careers. For such fathers children become a means of satisfying their own unfulfilled ambitions. There are other fathers who tend to be overprotective about their daughters.

In the working class, where violence is not uncommon against women, only a few fathers are close to their children. Some men in this class do play a very positive role and make good fathers, because in their childhood they had the experience of looking after a younger brother or sister while the parents were away.

The obliviousness of fathers to their responsibilities is regrettable not only because it is unfair to their wives. It is unfair to their children as well who do not secure the love and companionship of their fathers, the absence of which tells on them during the difficult years of adolescence. They also deprive themselves of a rich and meaningful relationship — a deprivation which is the cause of an emotional void later in their lives.

To conclude: As fathers, men are not quite emancipated as yet, but they are not incorrigible either. There is a possibility of change, an adaptation to the new situation. A father can, after all, do anything a mother can. Except bear children, of course.

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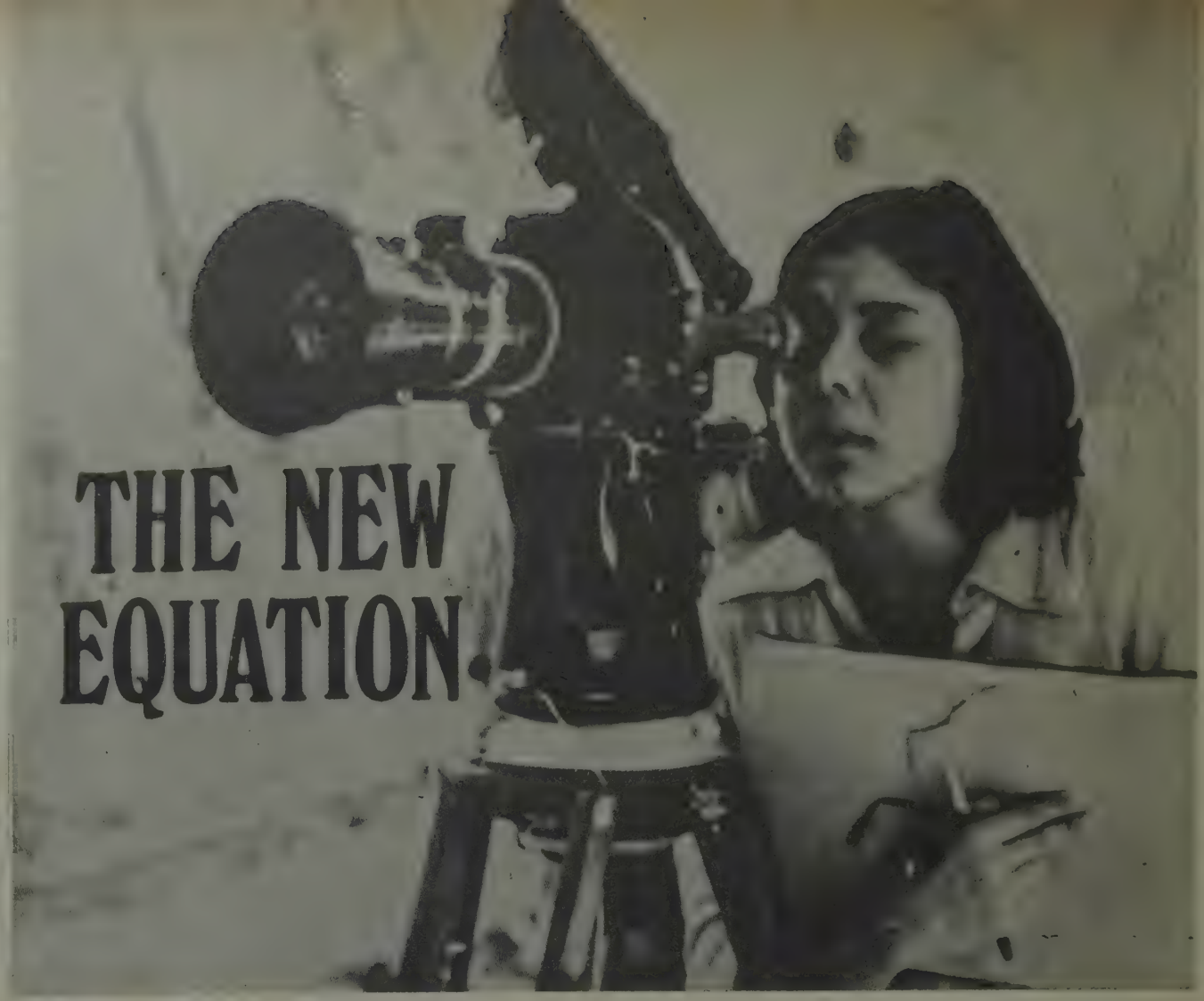
HA HA HA
HA HA HA
HA HA HA

THE NEW EQUATION



Until about a couple of decades ago, among upper and middle class families at least, sexual roles were clearly defined: men were providers, who went out to work and brought back money; women were housekeepers who tended to the home and reared children. Partly because they were physically stronger but largely because they controlled the purse strings and could dictate terms, men grew to thinking of themselves as inherently superior to women. Also given the degree of sexual repression in our society, large numbers of them went through life without ever relating to a single member of the opposite sex, their close relatives and spouses apart, and as a result, often carried to their graves totally erroneous or grossly simplified notions of female psychology and ability.

But today, with the female workforce increasing by leaps and bounds, men are discovering that the old equation no longer holds. Their preconceived notions and simplifications are, for the first time, encountering reality. Has this led to any fundamental change in the male outlook? Assuming that a particular job can be done equally well by men and women (as most jobs can) how much importance do employers nowadays attach to the sex of an appliant? What sort of relationships arise between male bosses and their female subordinates? Is the boss's attitude to his female typist or secretary different from his attitude to women officers and executives who are also his subordinates? How much does he expect from female employees? Do they have to perform even better than their male counterparts to win their superiors' confidence? How do male colleagues react to a woman who is rising fast in the profession? Do men look upon bright women subordinates as a threat?

WITH THE FEMALE WORKFORCE INCREASING, MEN, IT WOULD SEEM, ARE FEELING "THREATENED". MALES HATE TO BE SURPASSED BY WOMEN AND WHILE MANY MALE BOSSES PREFER MALE SUBORDINATES, MOST MALE WORKERS ARE DUBIOUS ABOUT FEMALE COLLEAGUES AND CERTAINLY WOULD NOT RELISH WORKING FOR A WOMAN BOSS. WILL THESE ATTITUDES CHANGE?

Debashish Mukerji

Such questions are not easy to answer, if only because men are different and react as individuals. Said a young journalist who works with a large number of women: "I've learnt one thing and that is there is no such thing as 'general female psychology'. You meet a certain number of women and come to certain conclusions, or you inherit some conclusions from your family and male friends, and then along comes a girl who proves all of them wrong."

So too with men. There are bosses who get along famously with women and there are bosses who will not even recruit them under any circumstances. Answers to the questions above cannot be definitive, they depend so much upon the kind of people one talks to. No matter how broad a cross-section one tries to reach, the result can at best be only a sampling of opinion, not a survey.

With this important qualification, the first conclusion I reached can be stated: though not enthusiastic about women encroaching onto their fields, men are, by now, more or less reconciled. **No longer do they dismiss women as inherently incapable; they now insist that women are not interested.**

And they have examples to prove it. An insider in Indian Airlines burst out: "Our front office is always short-staffed. People complain about having to wait in long queues for their tickets. Do you know why? Because we employ women. First they will go on maternity leave, then casual leave, then sick leave, then privilege leave, then leave without pay, but they will not let go their jobs. And being a government organization, as long as a post is not vacant, we cannot recruit another person."

A school principal voiced a similar complaint. A marketing executive added the explanatory note: "Working women can be divided into two groups — those who need the money (the majority) and those who don't. Those who do are usually from lower middle and middle class families and are often married. They have responsibilities at home too. These impose their own restrictions. For instance, they may not be able to work overtime because their parents mind or their husbands will be coming home. In the final anaylsis, their

homes are much more important to them than their jobs. The job is seen in a purely functional light — as a means of increasing the family income. The other type, the ones who don't need their jobs, can never forget the fact. They're worse."

Said the personnel manager of a pharmaceutical company, summing it up, "Given a man and a woman with the same qualifications and experience, I would, nine times out of ten, choose the man."

With notions of female disinterestedness as widespread as this, it is no surprise that women, even after recruitment, have to prove themselves before they are completely accepted by their male colleagues and superiors. Even at the secretarial and clerical levels, where large numbers of women have infiltrated, a new female entrant is, as one of them put it, "guilty — of inefficiency, incompetency, disinterestedness — until proved innocent". At higher levels the tests to be passed predictably grow more difficult.

Suppose a woman manages to overcome the initial scepticism of her male employer. What happens next? Exceptions apart, the relationship varies according to the woman's status in the organization. A man's attitude to his female secretary, typist or clerk is quite different from his attitude to a woman who is just a rung or two below him on the executive ladder. With their secretaries men feel relaxed, secure : hence they are usually friendly, informal, at times patronizing.

A middle-aged woman, who has been personal assistant to the Finance Director of a company for many years, said thoughtfully, "Bosses want to be friendly but they will never take any trouble over it. **You** have to constantly respond to **their** moods. When they want to flirt or chat you must be prepared to flirt or chat. The next minute they may, without any warning, decide to start work. You have to immediately drop all banter and grow coldly professional."

But women officers and executives cannot be trifled with; male bosses, unsure of their strength and influence here, are noticeably less cordial. A male supervisor often develops close relationships with some of his immediate male subordinates; rarely with any immediate female subordinate. Even here distinctions can be made. While easygoing female officers are tolerated, even accepted, ambitious assertive women arouse deep, abiding hostility. Men simply hate to be surpassed by women; they would like to pretend that they are not competing at all. When a girl, a friend of mine, received a special increment, word soon got around and a few of her male colleagues even congratulated her. A few days later she reached her desk to find on it a photograph of a man and a woman engaged in oral sex. A ridiculous, extreme response : men are usually more subtle.

Methods of making life difficult for female officers and executives vary from firm to firm: the woman may be excluded from informal policy discussions, vital papers may not be passed on to her, concocted or exaggerated tales of her incompetence may circulate up to the highest levels of the organization. (Fortunately, ambitious women are also usually very resilient — such tactics have little effect on them.)

Now for the flip side of the coin. What about those women (admittedly few) who reach a level where they have a number of males working under them? Do these men feel humiliated having to work under a woman? Are they subjected to ribbing and light ridicule from their friends? Does it belittle them in the eyes of their wives?

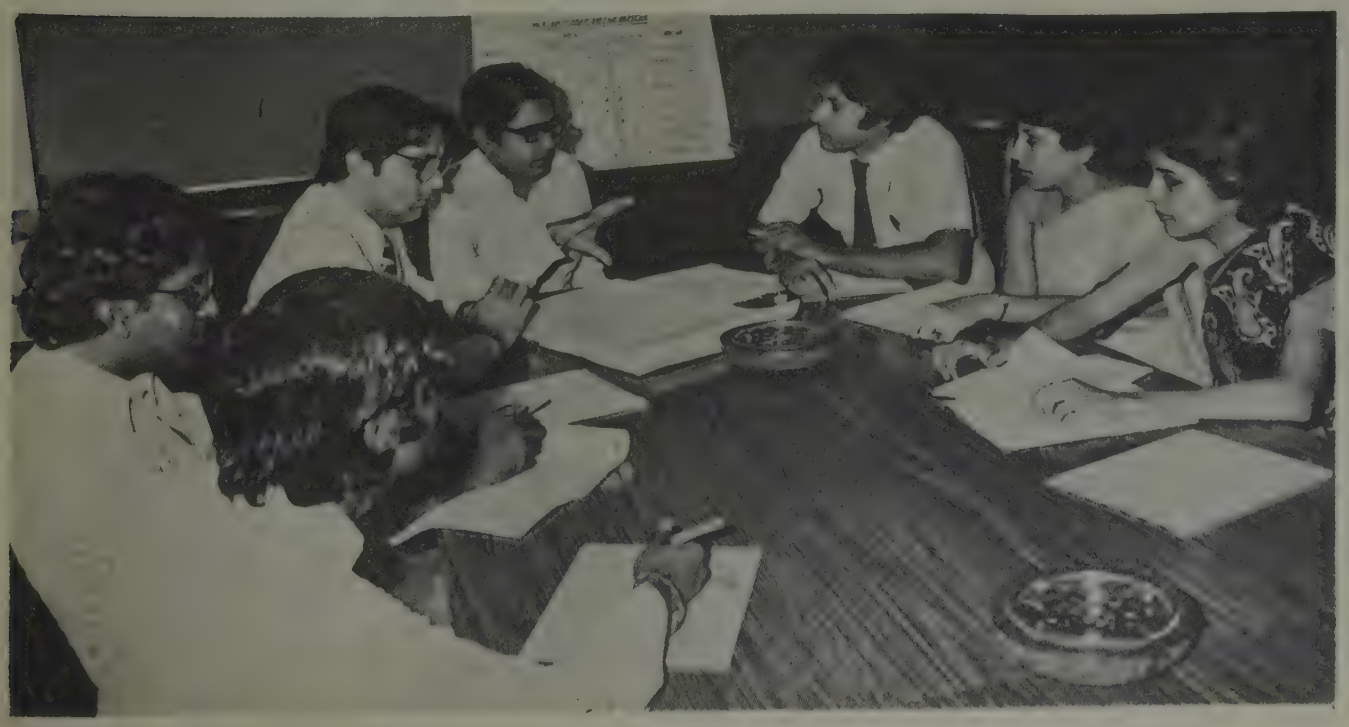
Said the young journalist: "I think we must admit that there are some women who are better qualified or more experienced at some jobs than some men. These men should have no problems about working under these women. It is competence in a boss that counts, not sex."

Few men in similar positions, however, are as mature as he. As a male Hindi teacher in a girls' school, run by a female principal, said: "We are brought up to believe that men should give women orders. Suddenly a person discovers that his situation is just the opposite. If there are a number of men working under the same woman, each one can console himself that he is not alone. They get used to it. But if it is just one man it is a problem for him." Of course men rationalize: they invariably discover shortcomings in their bosses and reiterate that it is these deficiencies they object to, not their bosses' sex. Bosses being human it is not difficult to discover faults if one looks for them.

Friends do not really care very much. They may, occasionally, indulge in light banter or even pretend to be envious, but it is nothing that men cannot handle. The real problems are at home : "Why don't you look for another job?" fond mothers whisper. "How do I introduce my wife to another woman about the same age as I, and say, 'This is my boss'?" asked a young man in anguish. "When she rebukes me I feel I'm back in school," said another.

Clearly attitudes still have to come a long way.

Equal participation in the decision-making process. Here advertising executives are busy planning a media campaign.



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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 21

one humorist sought to convince me that women, "God's most delicious mistake" (my toe nails curled upwards to meet a drooping jaw) "used to lap it up." And without exception, they all modestly staked credit for developing this "pointed, rapier wit", "tough style" and "no velvet glove business"!

My protests, personal and painful, continued. Does all humour have to be at the expense of someone or other? The overwhelming answer to this was an emphatic 'No' and a lone "Yes' was qualified by "as long as it's without malice." Faces turned predictably incredulous and with exaggerated magnanimity they made allowances for me and pondered aloud as to what all this fuss was about. Was I completely without a lighter side? Surely, I, a 'poppet', 'honey', 'chicken', 'sweetie', 'lamb', yukcetera, was just supposed to flop my eyelashes and wiggle my cute self from lap to lap rather like a limp table napkin? The analogy, used by one (t)wit to illustrate the 'unenviable fate' of spinsters ("She could've married anyone she pleased. She just didn't please anyone"), is telling.

It unmasks and reveals all the prejudices that a lot of men have about women. Excuse me, but your Freudian slip is showing. Women exist as exclusive property of men to be 'man' handled, s/exploited and abused at their whim and will. Between 'feminine incompetence' and the 'female body' men, it seems, will be entertained and bolstered for many laughs to come.

"Write so that you create a mental picture," advised a columnist who has nurtured and rewritten what seems like the same column for a women's magazine, for 29 years! He argues that there has to be "deliberate exaggeration", even "contrivance" but "I'm not drawing blood."

Really? It seems that he cannot see beyond his nose, let alone read between his own lines. Humour in this form is reactionary and retrogressive, serving as it does to reinforce stereotypes, strengthen biases and impede change of society's attitude towards half (if not more) of its members. It is appalling that writers who can satire/clown/pun their critique of society should pride themselves on peddling prejudices and trading insults so cheaply.

MALE PURVEYORS OF SICK HUMOUR

Curiously enough, none but one rejected the claims feminists make for themselves, but their opinions on certain specific questions illustrated how unreal their appreciation was. A sample of these antiquated reactions, random and not even worthy of refutation, follows.

"Man is a philanderer by nature. . .basically bigamous. Woman is a rein to keep back the horse."

"Woman was made by God to be a queen in the home. It is there where she can really shine ... In the history of mankind where women have tried to be queens, the results have not been spectacular." Examples included Cleopatra, Elizabeth I. I can name countless statesmen who have lapsed into history unceremoniously. Do I take it that they were "queens" too?

The claim for the most undignified statement however, undoubtedly goes to:

"Women have instinct... can't be reduced to reason, it's called female logic... women's brains weigh less... not as physically strong as men. Men are much more imaginative, though less intuitive... therefore fewer women poets, creative artists... women are not capable of it."!

The writer to whom this last ignominous quote can be attributed represents perhaps the worst specimen of the blinkered and supremely boorish male I have yet encountered. In his overripe middle age, nascent old age, he wears a crew cut, looks like a militarist and writes for a large and respected publishing group. He believes that the women's movement is "a non-event" and exhorted me to write on more important matters like the water problem. On Kate Millet (whose Iranian visit he'd misconstrued, and that's being polite, as a personal tirade against all Iranian males!) he had this to say, "Kate Millet has a hormone problem... tragic sex life... maybe (she was) slapped at the age of three by a man..." Meeao... Meeao!

The word 'liberation' assumes, he underlined, that women were not free. No doubt tradition debarred women from enjoying certain privileges — like being part of the US Marine Corps — but was she not free and equal before law? Mario's retarded business executive would seem to brim over with insight in comparison with this gentleman. Suddenly I felt like the common man in Laxman's cartoon.

The only deviant I discovered among this galaxy of intrepid humorists who wield a weaponry of words in a last ditch stand for male solidarity, is a guy whose personal views of women are quite at variance with the image he gives to the protagonist of his column — a wife who nags from beginning to end.

His laconic "Indian men are boring and pathetic" contained in it the seeds of many simple truths and he assured me that a bunch of gossiping males would make women engaged in a similar pursuit seem like silent convocation.

However, quite casually, male conservatism crept up on him only ventured out after arming myself with a collection of their most unquotable quotes, which most tragically was presumed to be evidence of some kind of devotion. Many anxious moments during the conversation and he admitted, 'Woman must come into her own, but quietly, because like underwear it's indecent if it shows."! It was **not** that 'top of the world feeling'!

The repetitious, regurgitated cameos that are etched for women are tedious, boring and, I suspect, the product of a desolate imagination. It was conceded by all that it is "easier to write on these foibles". What else can one say? "Does a man whistle at a woman's brain?"

Is it not strange that most of the debunking that is done in these self-conscious, often "borrowed" pieces is of an Anglicized culture that more or less begins and ends in Pali Hill, Bandra, Bombay 50, if there? I mean, how many of us can honestly say that the following is true of our lives?

"Mother shops for party games, father plays fast and loose and the kids prank around sowing wild oats." And besides do people still call their kids Confucius, Otto and Ju Ju?

Perhaps the worst jokes are those with crude sexual overtones. "Tell me have you found yourself a regular bull?" asks the sexy 'ladies man' who was accustomed to "a blond on one knee, a brunette on the other and a redhead in between." It's only a curiously puritanical self-restraint that seems to save us from the even more gory details of the 'reverence to rape' syndrome.

If man is thus the aggressor and transgressor, he is also alternately a victim and captive, for there is no doubt that men are similarly stereotyped as alcoholics radiating a violent virility and on the verge of sexual frenzy. And if he isn't oozing all, let alone any of these qualities, most likely he is 'gay', or, to adopt a euphemism, 'unlucky in love'!

Sexist treatment of human beings, whether male or female, is abusive and completely reprehensible. It crystallizes and simultaneously reinforces society's view of its members, particularly women, as commodities to be bartered and battered as it increasingly commercializes. But women have seen through the french negligees and sweet nothings. This 'joke' is no laughing matter — as someone once said, "There's no such thing as a little pregnant."

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ing you women will start raping us."

One man's rhetoric, but it reflects many men's fears that the modern woman is out to deprive him of his masculinity. The early phase of the Women's Move-

than the pressures on woman. But even while recognizing this, man is reluctant to change the social order, and work towards equality, harmony, and sharing. By examining the psychology of the rapist we can attempt to probe various aspects of the man-woman relationship. What

Contradicting the popular misconception that rape is an impulsive release of sexual energy, psychologists assert that the motive underlying rape is not sexual gratification but aggression and domination. Research indicates that 60-70 per cent of all rapes are preplanned with the victim a person the rapist is at least slightly familiar with. Over 70 per cent of rapes occur indoors and the offence takes place in

sexual and aggressive drives of his personality. In 1965 an American researcher, **McClean,** found evidence that the neural systems for sexual and aggressive behaviour are located in close proximity within the limbic system of the brain and may perhaps, partly overlap or even be directly linked. This theory is supported by observations of

IT IS THE VIEW OF MOST PSYCHOLOGISTS THAT THE MOTIVE UNDERLYING RAPE IS NOT SEXUAL GRATIFICATION BUT AGGRESSION AND DOMINATION

Meher Pestonji

ment in the West, the militant, anti-male, bra-burning stance triggered off the insecurity evident in such a reaction. And men and women glared at each other across the gulf of non-communication.

But as women, and the movement evolved towards maturity, initial militancy gave way to a basic re-examination of the social structure. Today many feminists are coming out to say that man is not the oppressor of woman, but is himself a victim of the forces of socialization. The main difference in the indoctrination process is that women are indoctrinated towards domesticity while man is shown the goals of achievement, and told "if you are to suceed, you have to reach that goal, through fair means or foul".

If anything, the pressures on

makes men and women fall into set behaviour patterns? Are such sex differences inherent? Are they just? Are men and women utilizing their potential to the fullest? Or are we both, men and women, one-dimensional creatures each developing one angle of the personality at the expense of another?

the home of the victim nearly 30 per cent of the time. These findings refute the common belief that the rapist is a sex-starved man driven by compulsive needs and that the victim is a foolish, reckless woman wandering down dark, deserted roads late at night. Many rapists are family men, holding regular jobs, having regular sex lives with their wives, and appear to differ from the normal person only in being more aggressive. Psychologists view them as persons with shaky egos and an unfulfilled need to feel powerful, a need they can only satisfy by dominating over others.

In its physical dimension, rape is the perfect combination of sex and violence. One school of thought holds that man has a biological heritage that links the

animal behaviour where the male often has to struggle with, dominate and overpower the female in order to have sexual intercourse. Thus it is supposed to be 'natural' to rape and it is only through the process of becoming civilized that man learns to control his basic instincts.

This viewpoint, however, is contradicted by a comparative analysis of different cultures. In her book **Sex and Temperament** anthropologist **Margaret Mead** describes the Arapesh tribe of New Guinea. The Arapesh are a particularly passive primitive community among whom rape is virtually non-existent. Indeed Ms Mead goes so far as to assert

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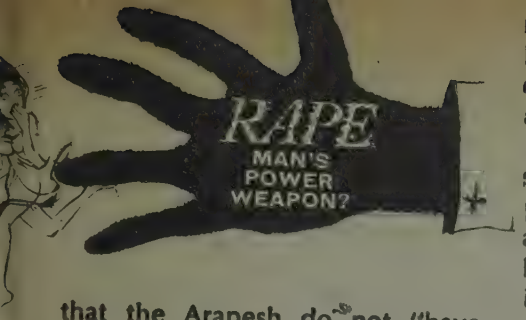

that the Arapesh do not "have any conception of the male nature that might make rape understandable to them".

Moreover, male domination is not universal to all societies. There have been matriarchal and matrilineal societies at different places at different times. The Zulu dictionary defines man as an animal trained by woman.

Disagreeing with the theory of a biological link between sex and aggression this school of social scientists holds the view that it is the process of socialization that fosters the male aggressive/female passive pattern, in which the rapist is not a deviant from the cultural norm but an extremist manifesting an exaggerated form of the stereotyped male.

These scientists contend, that the basic elements of rape, i.e., the male domination/female submission syndrome are to be found in all heterosexual relationships. Studies indicate that rapists do not constitute a unique psychopathic type, nor are they as a group more disturbed than the control groups to which they were compared. According to Professor **Menachem Amir,** who, in 1971 made a study of 646 cases of rape at Indiana University, U.S.A., "on a statistical average, the man convicted of rape was found to have a normal sexual personality tending to be different from the normal well-adjusted male only in having a greater tendency to express violence and rage". It is merely a quantitative difference that separates the rapist from the average dominant heterosexual. Indeed, according to one psychologist, "every man might be an armchair rapist. It is (supposed to be) as normal for men to fantasize about rape as for women to fantasize about being raped, but the normal man retains control over his fantasies. The only difference between a rapist and a non-rapist is the vital difference between having a fantasy and acting on it."

Dr. **Jehangir Kohiyar,** a Bombay psychiatrist, describes the rapist as a psychologically imbalanced person with a lack of confidence

history of unpleasant early experiences with women. He speculates the possibility that the act of rape might be preceded by an incident or a series of incidents sparking off an extreme sense of inadequacy in the rapist — e.g., a series of confrontations with an employer resulting in the loss of a job. Rape is a temporary loss of control in the face of intense frustrations by a person who may not be a deviant at all the rest of the time.

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Socialisation is the process by which behaviour patterns considered desirable by society are encouraged to develop by reinforcement during childhood, while others considered undesirable are discouraged and consequently extinguished. Many scientists argue that the present pattern of socialization is structured to breed passivity in the female and aggression in the male. It is observed that from birth itself parents respond differently to male and female children. Mothers tend to smile more, talk more and are more protec-

of two significant emotions — anger and affection. Typically boys are permitted to express anger through physical means or to sublimate anger through socially acceptable symbolic activities such as sports which are also physical in their orientation. Girls, on the other hand, are encouraged to inhibit the expression of anger and to re-direct their energies into fantasy and imaginative doll-play. Moreover, girls are encouraged to express their need for softer emotions — love, affection, tenderness. Boys dare not express such needs, not because

are towards sons. As a result differences in behaviour are noticeable as early as at one year of age with girls being more dependent and less exploratory in their play activities while boys are more vigorous, tending to run and bang in their play. By the time children reach the age of four distinct sex differences are already evident.

Most relevant in the context of adult sexuality is the difference in the channels developed for the expression and repression

they don't have such needs but for fear of being labelled 'sissy'. In childhood itself the stage is set for boys to view the body as a tool for expressing anger but not for expressing warmth.

Psychoanalyst **Ramanbhai Patel** offers an explanation of how a child might develop psychopathic aggression. According to the psychoanalytic school of thought, sexuality is not a latent drive that emerges only with the onset of adolescence but is one dimension of the personality developing from the moment of birth. A child's subconscious sexual awareness and his interactions with his parents are at the root of all adult behaviour. Ramanbhai says: "A child's early frustrating experiences with his mother make him feel aggressive and sadistic towards her, and the arousal of these aggressive feelings go beyond his ability to control them. If a child from such a background observes parental coitus his sexual urge becomes irrepressible, but being a child he is unable to perform the act. He has to suppress his urge to such an extent that he cannot work it out in fantasies or sublimate it. As this boy grows into manhood he might be compulsively dominating and in an extreme case a rapist."

As the child grows into adolescence, he experiences varying degrees of complex emotions. While his response to people and to situations has been directed into socially acceptable channels, the socialization process fails to educate him in how to cope with undesirable emotions. He encounters anxiety-provoking situations with little or no idea of how to express his emotional needs, how to respond sensitively to the needs of others; in other words, how to relate to people in a constructive creative manner. He turns to peers of his own sex, most of whom are as ill-equipped as him in these areas.

In the "male-bonding" situation, as its called, group dynamics take over. Individuals lose whatever sense of identity they have, and the collective group acquires a character of its own which may have little in common with the individuals comprising the group. A hierarchy is established within the group and the leader plays a pivotal role in defining the shape of the group and the nature of its activities. If the group leader is

Continued on page 57

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In our society, it would appear being a man means being capable of humiliating a woman. Sanction to insult and abuse women is taken for granted by men, who are actually diminishing themselves, in the process

EVE-TEASING

THE "MANLY" SPORT

Jyoti Punwani

"Often, I feel like scratching, throttling them. Sometimes, I think I'd like to pull their damn things out."

"I would love to see him beaten up. He would be begging for mercy and I would stand and watch him feel ashamed."

"We should be allowed to carry guns and shoot men who try to touch our bodies."

"Girls should carry knives to poke men enough to hurt and draw blood."

These are voices of ordinary women, provoked to murderous rage against men by eve-teasing. How different are the views of ordinary men on the same phenomenon was something I had never realised.

The shocking truth is that most men have never thought seriously about eve-teasing. When asked why men tease women, the spontaneous reactions were: "Just for fun", "Time-pass", 'Out of a sense of mischief". "We have never thought about it, you know. It's not like politics; that's always being discussed. Eve-teasing is not even written about. So it doesn't generate any opinions in us." explained **Ramesh,** an architect.

Their casual attitude towards something women feel so deeply about is made worse by the beliefs they hold: (a) That certain forms of eve-teasing are harmless and even complimentary and hence enjoyed by women, for example, whistles and 'witty' (!) comments; (b) That only adolescent and/or economically deprived boys indulge in it, and (c) That it is non-existent in Bombay and prevails only in the North.

The women quoted above are all Bombayites, so that takes care of (c). And 20-year-old **Sudha's** experience should do so for (b): "I've had my bottom pinched by a nine-year-old and been propositioned by a 60-year-old." The first belief can only be destroyed by defining eve-teasing.

Eve-teasing can be defined broadly as inflicting male presence on a female stranger without caring to know whether she wants it or not. It includes ogling, whistling, passing comments loud enough for her to hear, whispering into her ear, singing songs as she passes by, making loud (and often obscene) sounds at her, deliberately brushing or pressing against her and touching her.

An unwanted comment from a stranger, more often than not said loud enough for others to hear too, is not most women's idea of a compliment. "Such a comment embarrasses me," said **Tara,** a media planner, "and no stranger has the right to make me feel embarrassed. I'm not on display to be commented on loudly by anyone on the road. Any such comment is an intrusion on my privacy." Even a male felt that "This is not the way appreciation should be expressed — it's too impolite." At any rate, such comments are not restricted to attractive women. The plainest and most soberly dressed one, too, gets her share of them. So they can't be considered to be compliments. (This also destroys the myth that only provocative fashions trigger off eve-teasing.)

If a few girls do enjoy being whistled at, it's because we are conditioned to judge our worth by the amount of male appreciation we get. Since friendship with men is usually taboo for adolescent girls, they satisfy themselves with comments from strangers.

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EVE-TEASING

Once it is accepted that the problem of eve-teasing has to be taken seriously, most men attribute it to sexual frustration. (It must be said here that most of the men interviewed had probably never gone beyond passing comments at girls in groups, if at all they had done that. Since walking up to a group of men and asking them why they had just said what they did would only invite further insults, and asking a man on the road why he touched you would either bring forth a complete denial from him, or make him run away, I had to get reactions only from male acquaintances.) Said **Sunit,** a young actor, "In our sexually repressed society, eve-teasing is the only form of interaction between young boys and girls in many colleges, and may sometimes even develop into friendship." Teasing of this sort is sometimes indulged in by girls too, but only by adolescent girls, and is done only in groups and only with boys whom they would want to get to know.

"All of us are keyed up to a very high sexual pitch most of the time," said Sunit. "Eve-teasing is the only outlet." "You can't discount the influence of films in this," said one critic. "In most films of the '50s and '60s, the romance starts with an eve-teasing incident and ends with marriage. Since the hero is glorified throughout the film, men would like to draw a parallel between him and themselves. Also, the heroine enjoys it (after her first petulant reaction) and men may genuinely feel eve-teasing is an expression of 'love at first sight', and expect women to respond the same way."

"But films could only act as catalysts," said **Sanjit,** another film expert. "I've seen so many films, and I've yet to tease a girl. It has to be inherent in you."

Surely all the men who tease women couldn't be sexually frustrated or so influenced by films. Besides, films can only develop ideas already latent in society. And, how come catcalls, whistles, molestation and rape are common even in societies where sexual friendships are allowed? Then, what sexual pleasure can a catcall or a whistle, which involves no physical contact, give a man?

"It gives him a sense of power, I guess. That he can say what he wants to any woman on the road and get away with it," felt many of the men. **Dilip,** a journalist, explained, "It's a way of proving that he's a tough guy, of proving his manhood. In college, boys dare one another to touch a passing girl's bottom." But what about the girl's feelings? "Men grab sex when they can, be it in a bus or on the road. How are they concerned with the woman's feelings?" asked Sunit.

But what makes them act with such disregard to our feelings? When people steal food in desperation, from those who have plenty; or when the homeless occupy lands lying vacant, which belong to the government and hence to them, they are jailed. They are considered criminals, when all that they are doing is finding their own means of survival in a society which has deprived them of these means. But any man can deprive a woman of her self-respect, can insult her in public, and get away with it, because doing so is a means of satisfying his ego and may also satisfy his unfulfilled sexual needs!

In our society, then, it seems being a man means being capable of humiliating a woman. The more obvious her discomfort and shame, the more is the man's sense of power. A Delhi eve-teaser said in a TV interview: "I enjoy seeing them fidget in anger and discomfort." The forms which such humiliation can take are many. Some were enumerated by Sudha. "The mild dose takes the form of comments which boys consider their birthright, and girls learn to ignore. Then there is that creepy touch which starts from the centre of your back and proceeds downwards. Extending a leg while cycling and making contact with a woman's body, helps relieve frustration for Delhi's boys.

Screen romances start with eve-teasing and end with marriage. But where do films draw their ideas from?

Cornering a girl in a bus and getting to know female anatomy, is another common pass-time. Pressing against a girl with the trouser fly open and looking unconcerned all the time, is also done. The sadists in the North carry blades, and cut the dress in a straight line from the top of the back to the small of it. If in addition to the blouse or kameez, the blade grazes tender skin, they are not deterred. Pulling a girl onto the man's lap is also done in Delhi's buses. Driving a cycle, car or even bus almost on to a girl is considered great fun."

Eve-teasing is an offence under the Indian Penal Code. Yet, in Bombay alone, women encounter an eve-teasing incident alomst every other day. Society seems to disapprove of eve-teasing, and even editorials in national newspapers condemn it as 'an insult to womanhood'.

In fact, however, society allows women to be insulted every day, everywhere, at any time. If you can habitually get away with committing an offence under the IPC, then, either social disapproval of it is non-existent. or is allowed to be taken so lightly as to render the disapproval meaningless.

Eve-teasing, then, is an expression of the power given by society to men over women, of man's right to use (and abuse) women as they wish. Ramesh, who admitted, first as a joke, that he and his friends had, as students, indulged in "harmless and limited" teasing, finally concluded seriously, "Basically, the fact that men couldn't care less about the (teased) woman's feelings arises from treating her as an object. But in our society, people **are** treated as objects, even women do this." The difference being that individuals treat others as objects only when they have some control over the latter. But by letting eve-teasing flourish, society lets **all men** use **all women** as objects.

This is the basic premise, though the motives that prompt men to tease women must be complex. Women can only speculate about these. "I think a lot of them must be frustrated about most parts of their lives and helpless about doing anything about it. The only people they can get the better of are women. This is an easy way of taking out their aggression, getting immediate results (by seeing the woman cringe or get angry) without the fear of arrest or censure," thought **Anna,** a confident young journalist. "Economic frustrations may get heightened at the sight of a well-dressed woman," felt **Anuraag.** It is very likely that men regard women as parasites who live off men, and regard women's work (work women have been forced into) as worthless. Women who look affluent would probably be even more looked down upon, and specially by the average Indian man, who is not at all affluent himself. Commenting loudly so that she feels humiliated or pawing her, could express, for him, his inherent superiority over her.

In India, the co-existence of a feudal-traditional culture with a capitalist-industrial culture produces complicated attitudes towards women. In a feudal culture, a woman is considered as a man's personal property. This is best illustrated in the **zamindar** concept of "Our women's **izzat** has to be safeguarded and let no-one dare to even look at them." But any woman, besides their own mother/sister/wife, is free for use. When we get furious at being pawed as though we were public property, we don't realise that in the eve-teaser's eyes, we may be just that. This ownership concept may also explain the phenomenon which is so common in Chandigarh and other Northern cities.

One **dada** marks out a certain girl as his own and if any man dares to fool with her he's had it. The girl, all this while, may be unaware that she already 'belongs' to someone. Right here in Bombay, **Rashna,** a beautiful girl, is followed to her office every day by a respectable-looking man, who blows kisses at her but runs away whenever she confronts him. He has probably built entire fantasies around her without having spoken, or wanting to speak, to her.

The traditional culture practically puts woman in **purdah.** Hence: "The modern working woman is flouting the feudal norms which most of our men still believe in. The average man in our cities has had to merge into the faceless anonymity of urban living, after life in a small village where each man has some identity. Hence he resents it when he sees a city woman, who should have no identity, freely travelling alone, and to that extent, expressing her individual identity and independence from traditional norms, which

Continued on page 37

At the end of the
home-work session...

Thirsty minds drink alike!

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MALE SEXUALITY

GROWING UP IN A MALE-DOMINATED SOCIETY, THE INDIAN ADOLESCENT HAS NEVER FELT THE NEED TO EXAMINE HIS SEXUAL NEEDS AND ATTITUDES. THE RESULT IS A VERY DISTORTED PSYCHE WHICH PUTS TREMENDOUS PRESSURES ON BOTH THE MALE AND THE FEMALE

Sunil Shanbag

There is very little honest talk in India about men's sexuality by men themselves. You are either faced with a shy and embarrassed man who answers all questions with either "I don't know" or "I don't think about these things". Or you have to listen to a long-winded account of daring sexual exploits that have left dozens of women sexually demolished by this dubious-looking, self-styled 'sex bomb' across the table from you.

Using questionnaires and a few face-to-face interviews, some views on their own sexuality were gathered from a selection of young working men. From the enthusiastic and honest response to the questionnaire it was clear that there is an urgent desire in many men to discover and understand their own sexuality. The women's liberation movement, in the West, allowed women to honestly examine their sexual needs and attitudes. Obviously men have never thought this necessary, living as they are in a male-dominated society.

Puberty in males, starting anytime from about ten years of age to 15, is usually attained between 14 and 18. This is also the age when sexual awareness begins to grow and in some cases there are events that cause considerable confusion.

Ashok is now 31, married and with a child, leading a happy married life, but he had a disturbing experience during puberty. "I woke up in the middle of the night with an uncomfortable sensation of wetness in my pyjamas. I was only 14 and shared the bed with my elder brother and younger sister. I had no idea what the wetness was, it wasn't urine, and I only knew that it had come from my penis.

For days I thought I suffered from a disease and dreaded the repetition of the incident."

What Ashok was not told at that time was that he had had a "wet dream" — that is, he had ejaculated during sleep. This is a common phenomenon, especially at that age, and it was probably triggered by a sexual dream.

To others, awareness of their genitals as pleasurable objects comes while bathing or incidental fondling of the genitals that evokes a pleasant sensation and an erection. Scientific studies have recorded erections in baby boys a few months old and also record that very often children derive pleasure from fonding the genitals.

HANDS OFF GENITALS!

This invariably leads embarrassed parents to sharply tell the child to keep his hand away from the genitals. The first step in sexual conditioning begins. The genitals are shameful, must always be kept out of sight and never touched except for purposes of hygiene.

"Various horrors of masturbation were put to me when I was seen masturbating by my father," said Nitin, 28, unmarried. "I was told that huge pimples would appear on my face, that I would never be able to have babies, and that I would never grow tall!"

But Nitin was more fortunate than Ashok because he had access to a medical book on sex and he knew that masturbation to orgasm was a technique used by a large percentage of men with varying frequencies, usually tapering off after the male becomes an adult. He also learned that most men reached an orgasm at some time or the other in their lives through masturbation and most young boys had their first ejaculation through masturbation.

In our society masturbation has been a subject more taboo than interpersonal sex. It forces the parents' attention on the sexuality of the offspring. Traditionally it was also seen as an admission of failure, compared with finding sexual expression in a relationship with another person. However, modern attitudes to masturbation see it not as a cause but a result of perhaps fear of sex, or simply the temporary absence of a partner. When Nitin was asked why he masturbates he said, "In a city like Bombay you are kept at a continuously high sexual pitch by films, advertisements, books, and you have sex thrown at you from all angles. I'm unmarried and I have to release my sexual tensions. Masturbation is my way out, and also the way out for thousands of males. It is a tremendous release."

By adolescence the desire to know more about sex drives young boys to any source available, however dubious it may be. The subject usually being taboo at home, access to pornographic literature and pseudo-scientific books on sex is sought. Pornographic literature, easily available in the regional languages or from abroad, accounts to a large extent for a man's mistaken view of his own sexuality.

The stud in pornography is a man who can perform endlessly without any physical exhaustion. He usually leaves a trail of exhausted and satiated women behind him everywhere he goes. One popular soft-core pornography series endows priapism on its hero. Priapism is a medical term for a non-sexual erection of the penis, and can be caused by a variety of disorders in the body ranging from pills, drug abuse, gonorrhea, back injury, or just convalesence from an acute illness. But, in this porn series the hero glories in his priapism because it is the ultimate fantasy of the everlasting erection, and he can make love endlessly to dozens of women at a time without spending himself.

PENIS LENGTH MYTHS

Pornography also lays emphasis on the physical size of the male genitals, asserting always that size is directly proportionate to the pleasure given or derived in the sexual act. This is probably the most common myth of male sexuality. Several of the men who were asked about this believed that a long penis was most essential for heightened sexual pleasure for both man and woman, some hastily adding that they were endowed with one "the normal size".

The average length of an erect penis is 6¼ inches and there is no clear proof that ethnic variations occur. That is, it is not necessarily true that blacks have immensely long penises and Asians, especially the Mongoloid races, have tiny penises.

There is a pressure on men to conform to the macho-image, much in vogue in Indian society. The most desired male is a well-built, tall, hairy and virile person. The Hindi film-star, Dharmendra, conforms marvellously to this image and is probably the most sought after sexual image among many Indian males.

Sudhir, a young bank clerk, has this as the ideal male image — "A sensitive face, smart body, hairy chest, good pulling eyes and confident movements."

PORNO-WARPING OF MINDS

The effect of porno-warping of sexuality could be seen in the "first-night" experience of Ashok. He took to reading pornography when he was in college.

"I was not addicted to it but also could not resist the temptation of a porn-book. The images and attitudes were stuck in my mind. When my wife and I were unmarried, but still going out together, we had a bad experience. In certain circumstances we found ourselves alone in complete privacy. We had known each other only for a short time but knew our attraction for each other. Well, being alone, I acted rashly, and desperately tried to make love to her. She reacted very adversely and this led to a temporary breakdown in our relationship. I am almost sure that it was the image of the woman in pornography that made me so rash. There the woman is always sex-starved and needs no tenderness or build-up to make love. She is a 'pushover' and always succumbs to the situation gladly with no inhibitions. I think I expected my wife to behave like that, because for a long time I failed to understand her reaction."

FEARS OF INADEQUACY

Ashok could not reconcile sexuality with his mythical image of a woman. This could lead up to psychological impotence in the male and frigidity in the female. Another common cause for psychological impotence in men, when they cannot achieve an erection, is when the man feels he has to perform impressively the very first time he has sexual intercourse. He fears he will not be able to please his partner, fears premature ejaculation and impotence itself. This can, in turn, lead to a general resentment towards women, neurotic personality disorders and also a fear of the vagina as a castrating instrument, that is, a belief that it could chop off one's penis.

In a feudal society where man dominates in all matters, sexual relationships between man and woman tend to be unequal. Man uses woman to satisfy his own sexual urge without a thought to her sexual needs. However, in urban areas, among the educated young, this view may not necessarily hold. When asked what his reaction is when he felt like making love and his wife didn't, Sudhir replied, "I usually sulk but try to understand her.

I know it is not right to sulk or get angry, because she has her own feelings and rights."

Nitin, though unmarried, says, "In such matters, it is important for both sides to willingly participate. I would never insist."

Others felt similarly.

If either Nitin or Sudhir took a stand where they insisted on going ahead with sex even when their partners were not willing, they would only be demonstrating another aspect of male sexuality in traditional society. Man rarely depends on the emotion of love in the bare act. The sexual urge is naked, without the frills of love. Therefore, very often after a sexual experience even devoid of love, the male is able to react favourably to the pleasure he has derived.

A woman is often disappointed with the sexual act itself because to her conditioned mind it is firmly linked with the emotion of love. In fact, the presence of this emotion, however superficial, is justification enough for surrender to the act. Coming up against the bare sexual urge of a man, therefore, can be traumatic, leading to disillusionment or an aversion to sex itself.

When asked how he would react if his wife expressed her desire to be satisfied sexually in a particular way, Sudhir said, "If the message came to me clearly, I would do it."

The communication between Sudhir and his wife, on sexual matters, is obviously full of ambiguities, him depending on "messages" from his wife, rather than straight talk. But then, it is rarely that there is an honest relationship between husband and wife in our society.

On the question of infidelity, common opinion usually forgives a man for his affairs with more than one woman. The argument usually is that a man's sexual urge is more basic than a woman's and less in control. A woman, on the other hand, can go long periods without sex, and without variety in her sexual life. This is another myth actively promoted by a male-dominated society. The reason why a man can have affairs or extra-marital relationships is probably that he is not afraid of pregnancy, and social ostracism has never been a big enough threat.

But, Ashok says, "If a woman can be faithful, so can the man. I have never had any trouble controlling my sexual urges."

Sudhir: "Both husband and wife should be faithful to each other, but I feel a man's sexual needs are more recurring in nature. A woman curbs herself because of her fear of a break-up with the husband, or pregnancy, but a man has no such fears."

Except for Nitin, who though unmarried, felt that he has good scientific information on several matters, the others felt that if they had not had to depend on "bad books" and gossip for their sexual knowledge, their married lives would have begun smoother than they did.

Ashok wound up the discussion on men's sexuality by saying, "So much depends on one being given correct information at the correct time. It would make the understanding of each other's sexuality easier for men and women."

EVE-TEASING

Continued from page 33

he is not able to do," felt a lecturer in a Delhi women's college. (In Shahada, rural Maharashtra, landless women have complained about being molested, but only by the **zamindars,** not by men of their own class. Does this show that ownership values in the former class are still prevalent, and more equal relationships are emerging in the propertyless class?)

Bourgeois or 'modern' culture reduces woman to a sex object. a commodity, and any man can buy her. A wife becomes her husband's property because he buys her with security and so must guard her; but, in a fully developed industrialised and commercial society, no brother feels obliged to defend his sister's 'honour'.

Sunit has no protective feelings towards his sister. "She's a girl living in a city. She should know how to defend herself," he said. "I wouldn't feel like avenging it."

The only identity given to woman by both cultures is sexual, and sex, in both societies, is considered dirty and furtive. Some of the disgust associated with it gets transferred onto woman. Perhaps that is why so many abuses are connected with female sexual organs; and also why eve-teasing often takes the form of obscene comments and sounds. Sudha mentioned, "Pressing a packet of contraceptives in an unsuspecting girl's hand and asking her if she knows what they are" as a new form of harassment. **Aruna's** experience in a Bombay local train left her feeling used and soiled. "I had got into a crowded gents' compartment in a hurry. A man offered me his seat. Later, as I was making my way to the exit, he started pressing himself against my back. When I got out, I discovered that the back of my shirt was wet and sticky."

Janet, a young working mother, recounted this incident. "Recently, a teenager kept leaning against me in a bus. When I got up, he followed me and pressed against me as I tried to get off. I threatened to hit him with my slipper and told him: **utarne ka hai to utro.** At that he answered loudly: **utarne ka nahin hai, chadhne ka hai.** I felt it was best to shut up. But he kept on abusing me going to the extent of threatening to teach me a lesson. He followed me till I met my girl friends. I was terrified and from that day I vowed never to talk back to any eve-teaser."

Most women don't require such incidents to silence them. The shame of public humiliation makes them ignore the most repulsive mauling; the knowledge that the police would not help prevents them from complaining to the latter. As Sudha said, "Ho, ho, the policeman will take you to the lock-up, strip you and examine you internally and prove that you had an affair with the guy."

Some women feel that such men should be flogged or given some harsh punishment to deter others; others went to the extent of blaming themselves for "giggling on the road at comments and hence encouraging eve-teasers". Some women did feel the need to learn self-defensive tactics like judo; others felt that "some of the men are so shameless that even salt thrown in their eyes won't have any effect." The violent desires expressed in the beginning of this article most women know are just fantasies, and pathetically, they all advise: "It's best ignored."

If the threat of rape keeps women always afraid of men, the fear of eve-teasing keeps women in a state of tension whenever they are out of their homes. **Shalini** had got so used to walking in Delhi with her elbows at an outward angle, and her bag held in front of her like a shield, that it was only when a male friend in Bombay asked her why she walked so oddly, that she realised it had become a part of her. We have to keep dodging on crowded pavements; sit tensed up in buses while the males next to us settle down comfortably. "I can't even run the length of the (suburban) station platform to the women's compartment because all the males hanging out of the train are bound to whistle or pass some disgusting remarks," said one commuter. "At such times I really feel like castrating them — that's all that makes them feel so powerful."

It is deeply disturbing to realise that we women are at the lower-most scale of society, lower than the lowest male. Praised skyhigh in literature and films and called **Devi** and **Shakti** in religion and philosophy, our actual position is made clear to us every time we walk down the road. The very biology that enables us to bear children and makes us be worshipped as Mother Goddess, condemns us to be constantly abused and considered good only for sex. Our situation is similar to that of the Scheduled Castes and the Blacks, who are reviled only because of their caste and their colour. (Of course, it is the Scheduled Caste woman and the Black woman who is the worst off.)

But like these two oppressed sections, we too have to cast off our fear and start uniting and fighting back as women have in Delhi. This would lead to greater abuse at first, but the self-confidence gained would itself be an enormous weapon.

However, showing that we are ready to fight back can only shake the basis of the structure on which male power rests. "A war between the sexes" as one journalist put it, can't destroy the structure. That can only be done when we are considered as individual beings and given the respect every human being must get. This can only begin when all of us are (at least) self-reliant and economically independent of men. But we cannot seek our Independence alone, just as the Dalits and the Blacks can't liberate themselves without involving the rest of society. If all men seem potential eve-teasers and hence potential rapists (eve-teasing being a verbal rape) we must realise that through centuries society has made them feel that women are dirt, to be enslaved and abused; and we must get them involved in fighting that society. Every society depends on the man-woman relationship, so we have to seek liberation for men along with our own liberation, to build a different society.

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SEXUAL FRUSTRATIONS IN THE MALE

Anurag Mathur

For the privilege of being the occasional possesser of woman, men have forsaken kingdoms, gone to war, destroyed empires, raised new ones and otherwise behaved in a singular and incomprehensibly juvenile fashion.

Even when such extremes are not being indulged in, normal, sober, average men were, are and will be doing things that would be rightly regarded as insane were they not so common globally. Men — overwhelmingly married, studies have shown —

Michele Payne is an American belly dancer who recently performed at the Supper Club of Hotel Oberoi Towers, Bombay.

Photograph : Farokh Reporter

When whiteness glows look–it shows...

it's washed with

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detergent cake

Spidel OM 35A/78

spend staggering sums of money many of them cannot afford for the sterile, impersonal and dubious pleasure offered by a prostitute, regardless of the genuine risk they face of contracting truly horrific diseases. Others watch goggle-eyed as somewhat unpleasant looking females shake their layers of fat while failing to keep time with music. This is called a cabaret and the pleasure men derive from watching a female who has to wear — at least in India — more clothes than at a swimming pool, must be vast, considering the salivating enthusiasm audiences display.

There are yet others who can dispense altogether with the requirement of a live women, but are eager and content to spend money on pornographic books, magazines, photographs and films that strain to portray females in as sexual a manner as will still enable them to stay out of jail. And now in Europe, Japan and America, we learn that technology has made such marvellous advances, that they have constructed a little rubber bag which when pumped with air takes on the contours of an appropriately wanton-looking woman, down to the last, most obvious details. A big doll for big boys to play adult games with. And deluxe models, we reliably learn, are equipped with motors that vibrate vigorously and whose movement can be controlled. For the fiscally conservative, advertisements in men's magazines assure us, it is not necessary to buy the entire creature, but just that — naturally vibrating — portion of the anatomy that the buyer is most enthused about.

WHY? This of course is the most obvious question. What drives men to acts of such lust-glazed folly?

Explanations from men are diverse. "It's the sex drive," mumbles a young journalist embarrassedly. "When sex rears its head, good sense flies out of the window."

This is obviously true. For the human race to survive it was necessary to have sexual relations and therefore the sex drive had to be strong. Other animals also mate to propagate, but they do so sporadically and almost exclusively to procreate. Man seems the only animal capable of perpetual arousal and who performs sex largely for enjoyment. Even if other animals do occasionally have sex for enjoyment — a fact that has not, to my knowledge, been proved — man is the only one who has made sex an art, a science, a monotonous compulsion, a profession, a technique, a craft. No other creature infused with the same instinct has hidden it so fanatically, or demonstrated it so ecstatically, punished for it, rewarded for it, sought it so ardently, painted, sculpted, written or sung songs on it, or otherwise in a myriad of ways displayed his unceasing obsession with this rather simple, biological, quite funny-looking act called sex.

But if men are the most sexual creatures on earth, why are women not as eager to indulge in the sexual variations he has created? Why are men the almost exclusive customers for the vast industries on the peripheries of sex?

They call them "sexual outlets" and trot out the same old theory about the surplus energies and aggressions which men have to contend with. But, these may really be sexual frustrations which make men the almost exclusive customers for the vast industries on the peripheries of sex

Ratan Aga, a young doctor, believes that men are more aggressive since they have traditionally been the hunters and the warriors. The environment a boy grows in makes him more aggressive than women. "Besides," adds the doctor, "I think there is a natural instinct for aggression implanted in men by nature to ensure that they lay the seed in women. After all if both sexes were shy and retiring and no one took the initiative, then how would children be born and how would the species survive?"

Aga also suspects that the energy and aggression of men is being thwarted in modern times and is increasingly finding expression in sexual outlets. He says, "Previously a man could work off his energy in fighting or hunting or plowing the field, but today he retains most of it by sitting behind an office desk. And so it expresses itself sexually, an area that still permits unlimited action."

Other men say they have a need for variety, though they may not accept Dr. Aga's theory on aggression. A married man, who understandably wants to remain anonymous, confesses, "I often go to prostitutes. I just have to." He explains, "I get bored of having only one woman. A human being needs variety in all his activities and that includes sex too. I simply have to have sex with other women." He hastens to add, "I love my wife very much and my going to prostitutes is no reflection on her. It's just a physical need I fulfil with other women."

When asked if his wife has equal liberty to enjoy the variety in her sex life that he says 'all human beings need,' he is angry. "Of course not," he snaps brusquely, "Women don't need the same kind of variety."

A collegian who also wishes to remain anonymous because "I'm afraid of what my parents will say," interjects: "Having variety in sex is of course a problem for many married people. But my problem and that of millions of other young people in India is the more fundamental one of having sex at all. . . Virtually all the unmarried people of India are horribly sexually frustrated. That's why we buy cheap magazines and go to cabarets and movies. Perhaps married men do it too, to get a little variety, but for most of us this is the closest we can get to actually having sex. We get to read about it, or we see pictures in magazines and then use those to fantasize. Or we see a dirty movie and participate by putting ourselves in the man's place. And even in a cabaret the eroticism is in the fantasies all the men have while watching the woman." He guesses that "fantasies are the sex life of the majority of India's youth. And of course everything goes in a fantasy; we are the lord and master and can do things that we wouldn't dream of doing in real life."

A "natural" appreciation of the female body — a reason often given when males run out of "excuses" for watching cabaret acts.

This young man also firmly believes that prostitution is healthy. "It offers an outlet for repressed energy and that's a good thing. Otherwise this energy would go into destructive activities and the frustration would lead to eve-teasing." He concedes, "Of course, going to a prostitute can lead to one's catching a disease, but too much sunshine can lead to skin cancer. There's a risk involved in everything you do."

A young executive, while professing himself embarrassed by the thought of the dolls made for sex in the West, thinks that "they would be incredibly popular in India. Just imagine, people buy them in countries where sexually things are so much easier, so think of how berserk people would go if they were made available here."

Concludes Dr. Aga: "The reasons why men indulge in what seems like the more morbid and bizarre aspects of sex-related behaviour — such as cabarets and pornography — are really not difficult to understand. First, it's the natural energy and aggressiveness of the male. Secondly, its the enormous frustration present in India for which fantasy is the only outlet. Plus, I suppose, the natural appreciation of the female body. And thirdly, it's the need for variety."

But the final word is said by a recent college graduate who freely admits to doing it all: going to prostitutes, reading pornography, watching cabarets and, he says, if he had the opportunity, experimenting with the inflatable rubber dolls as well. "I do it," he says with a cheerful grin, "because I like it."

THE PEACOCK PREENS!

Fleming Rodrigues

Despite their snide remarks about women's preoccupation with looks, men, too, are becoming 'beauty' and 'fashion' conscious. They are visiting beauty parlours for manicures and facials, while their clothes have acquired the bright hues of modernity

It is not only the prudes and the strait-laced that are consumed with bewilderment at the appearance awareness and dress consciousness that is rampant among the male species today — it is the males themselves who are left rather amazed at this sudden metamorphosis of traditional beliefs, customs and ideas.

Not very long ago, to be scruffy and unshaven was considered very masculine (wrongly so, but nevertheless. . .) and the most a male could be was neat. Besides, to be accepted by society, he had to confirm to its strict prevailing norms — an attempt

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have hair, or is their hair made of sterner stuff?) and men were therefore deprived of keeping their hair clean, healthy and nourished, since that is the claim of most shampoos. Besides, men are undeniably more prone to baldness and being bald was never the rage, so why shouldn't men spend time on hair care? Fortunately (?) there were no restrictions on toothpastes!

A guy couldn't spend more than Rs. 1.50 on a haircut, unless he didn't mind being labelled a dandy or something more derogatory. Of course, facials, manicures and pedicures were taboo and unthinkable for any male, and the mere suggestion would only succeed in raising shocked eyebrows, confirming false suspicious or leading to rash conclusions that a man who indulged in such practices was a latent homosexual, and should be checked (thereby treating homosexuality as a criminal offence on par with rape or illegal abortion). Fashions for men did have their share of marginal changes — narrow trousers became broad, occasionally with pleats; shirts were either loose or well-fitting, and shoes had

LEFT: No more sober colours for men. In colour as well as style, fashionable clothes are becoming unisexual.

ABOVE: The hip-wallet is out. The 'in' thing is the handbag.

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either rounded, square or pointed toes.

Then that highly controversial beat group, 'The Beatles', arrived on the scene in the early sixties. A group which dared to be different, not only with their unique musical talent but with their long hair, something which till their arrival was considered effeminate. With the advent of long hair, men slowly broke away from other prevailing norms.

No longer was the male confined to a restricted wardrobe of conventional trousers and shirts. His dormant creative talent urged him to experiment. Entered the bell bottoms. Subdued at first, with a 16" flare, which gradually widened to a 32" flare. Men went to get their hair set and even permed with no pangs of guilt. They wore high boots and pointed shoes (which have now once again come into vogue) and spent time and care on their purchase. Men today have started carrying smart handbags, instead of ugly folders, cloth bags or brief cases. And, most important, they walk proudly up to a beauty parlour for pedicures, manicures, massages and even facials. Top, popular singers like Alice Cooper and David Bowie and the rock group KISS use thick, bright makeup on stage when performing and go in for elaborate hair-do's.

With the recent Punk movement in England, men's fashion's have even taken a bizarre turn—vivid makeup, plucked eyebrows, hair dyed in every conceivable colour, ear-rings and other jewellery, and the flashiest, most outrageous clothes.

In India, however, the era of the well-dressed, well-groomed man has arrived and is here to stay, we hope. Of course, opposition will remain and conventional, stubborn old-timers will hold their views. I am told that for some incomprehensible reason of their own, the management of the Metro Cinema in Bombay still does not permit males wearing sleeveless shirts or even magyar sleeves, the latter being one of the latest fashion get-ups. Considering they don't prevent a girl wearing a mini skirt, from admission, one naturally frowns at this absurd partiality. After all, what is so offensive about magyar sleeves?

Not that the male has never been dress-conscious before. Many men of the early 19th century in England insisted on perfect tailoring, fine materials and quiet colours for their clothes, worn with immaculate linen and well polished boots. Out of

Outfits Courtesy: FLORA Men's Wear, Bombay.

Photographs: Farokh Reporter

BELOW: The accent is on comfort. The kurta-jeans is giving way to the Pathan outfit.

Enter the chic-modithread "needlework contest"

Anyone who can do embroidery, tatting, knitting, crochet or handicraft can win!

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INCENTIVE

chic - modithread "needlework contest"

Rules and Regulations

1. Each entry must be accompanied by the Contest Entry Coupon available in this advertisement and at all Modithread dealers, Modithread Craftshops, Modithread depots and distributors and in Chic magazine during March, April, May, June, July and August 1979.
2. Entries may be articles of embroidery, crochet, knitting, tatting or handicraft. Entries in each category have an equal chance of winning.
3. There is no entry fee. Each entry must be accompanied by the labels of the Modithread used. If you have difficulty in getting Modithread, you may order them by V.P.P. from Chic magazine or from your nearest Modithread depot.
4. All prize-winning entries become the property of Chic Publications and will not be returned. Merit and consolation prizes will be returned after they are published in Chic magazine. If selected for publication, the prize winner will be requested to send complete instructions and will be paid the normal Chic contribution fee.
5. Non-prize winning entries will be returned by post within three months, after the last date of the contest.
6. The contest is open to all residents of India except employees of Chic Publications, Modithread Mills and Incentive Marketing & Advertising Pvt. Ltd. and their families.
7. The 1st prize winner (TCI-SITA trip to the U.S.A.) must be eligible for travel abroad according to Reserve Bank of India Regulations. All travel formalities will be undertaken by the winner. Compulsory travel tax will be payable by the winner.
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9. Chic Publications and Modithread Mills will not be responsible for entries lost or delayed in transit.
10. The decision of the judges will be binding and final. No correspondence on the subject will be entertained.
11. All entries must reach the Modithread Depot in your territory before 31st August 1979 (the address of which is detailed in the advertisement).
12. Prizes cannot be encashed.

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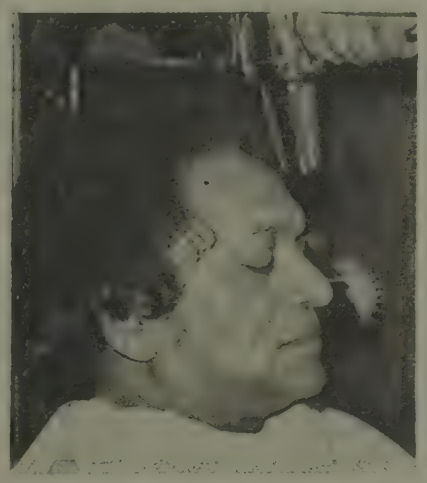
INCENTIVE

doors, men wore frock coats with full skirts for riding and grey coats in cold weather. Mackintoshes first appeared in 1836, breeches were worn but not as much as trousers and pantaloons, which were tight-fitting and strapped around the instep. Materials varied from tartan cloth to green velvet. Cut-away coats with tails were worn indoors with gaily coloured silk and velvet waistcoats and neckcloths or cravats. In the mid-Victorian age, after the 1850's, men's clothes grew plainer and darker. It was considered 'bad form' to dress conspicuously. A well-dressed man needed a frock coat, morning coat, dress coat and overcoat. The frock coat was worn for visiting, with tight trousers, tall hat and lavender gloves. The dress coat or black tail coat was worn in the evening with a white or black necktie. Then there was a time when men spent hours powdering their wigs, polishing their boots and spending a lot of time, care and money on their clothes. I doubt we shall reach that stage of fastidiousness here or be as finicky as our ancestors, but the male should certainly take trouble about himself and his appearance. Below are three points of view given by a fashion designer, a bag shop owner and a footwear owner.



Allan Gill was a cabaret artiste cum woman impersonator for about 15 years. He is now a very successful fashion designer for a leading boutique in Bombay. This is what he has to say about the renewed dress awareness of men. "There was a time when colognes and lotions were completely taboo for men. If he dared use any of these he was not considered a man! Today, fortunately, facials, waving and perming of hair and all the rest of it is here to stay and men can look a lot better than the so-called he-man. And why not? Why should women alone have the privilege of bobbing their hair, flattening their bust line, wearing suits and shirts? Why

Continued on page 57

Genius does not preclude beautifying! Here is the great Ravi Shankar having a 'blow-dry' and a facial at the Chiron Beauty Salon in Centaur Hotel, Bombay.,

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GROWING UP MALE

MEN ARE TYPECAST — TO A GREATER EXTENT, PERHAPS, THAN WOMEN. IT IS THIS SOCIALIZATION PROCESS, RATHER THAN BIOLOGICAL DISPOSITION, WHICH SHAPES THE SEX ROLES THAT MEN AND WOMEN HAVE COME TO REGARD AS NATURAL

Prem Sagar

Ammu Joseph

"Isn't it unfair," said a friend, a woman, the other day. "We can talk of chucking up our jobs and even do it and get away with it — the poor men can't even dream of it."

"What's so unfair," retorted another woman. "That's part of being a man."

Just as having babies and bringing them up is part of being a woman.

It's really so simple and so very convenient. We are divided, as even a six-year-old knows, into two groups of people, men and women. Depending on whether one belongs to one group or the other, different behaviour patterns and personality characteristics are expected accordingly. Men are aggressive, active, instrumental, independent, responsible, and ideally big and strong — born, as it were, to greatness. Women are passive, emotional, docile, dependent, domesticated and delicate — best fit for motherhood and home-making.

The differences are clear, their existence indisputable and the whole system eminently workable. What then is the problem?

The problem lies in the answer to a question that has attracted much research attention in recent times, especially in the wake of the women's movement, when women began to realize that the traditional concept of a woman and her role in society had little basis in natural fact; that it in fact restricted their functioning as complete human beings.

The question then is: are the clearly perceptible differences between men and women inherent and natural, or are they learned, the results of differential socialization?

And the answer to the question, overwhelmingly supported by evidence from countless studies, is that it is the socialization process, rather than biological predisposition, that shapes the sex-roles * that men and women have by and large come to accept as entirely natural and self-evident.

---

* The term 'sex-role' refers to patterns of behaviour considered appropriate for each sex — behaviours typical of the ideal male or female as defined by society.

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GROWING UP MALE

Socialization begins at birth and so surely is its message internalized that even very small children have clear ideas about what is appropriate behaviour for girls and what for boys. (See Box)

Sex-role learning in these early years goes through three distinct stages. First, children learn to distinguish between men and women and between boys and girls, and to know what kinds of behaviour are characteristic of each. This they do by identifying with and imitating the adult role models around them (parents, siblings, teachers and others), by taking in and assimilating specific instructions about what to do and what not to do, and by picking up cues from other sources like school, picture books and television or films (all of which are notorious for their steadfast loyalty to sex-role stereotypes).

Once these basic distinctions are made, children begin to express sex-role preferences, and then, set about learning appropriate sex role behaviour — or how to act like a boy or a girl.

Boys at all ages tend to show stronger preference for the masculine role than girls reveal for the feminine one. More girls admit a desire to be boys than boys to be girls. Not surprisingly, the same trend is seen among adults as well. A summary of several related studies puts it this way: "Only two per cent and four per cent of adult men, compared to between 20 per cent and 31 per cent of adult women, seem to recall consciously having been aware of the desire to be of the opposite sex."

This is clearly linked to the obvious advantages that go with being male and the equally perceptible disadvantages that go with being female in contemporary society. The greater prestige and numerous privileges connected with the masculine role need hardly be elaborated upon, but it is interesting to see how some of the children we asked perceived the situation:

"I've never wished I was a girl because I don't want to be a cook when I grow up and get married and be dominated by anybody."

"No, I can have more fun as a boy."

There is no place for a shy, timid, sensitive boy in the "masculine" world to which he, born male, must belong.

"I like to be a girl except sometimes as if ever you got about playing mischief somebody says don't be a boy. This is when I feel I wish I were a boy."

Sex-role socialization is so fascinating and so complex a subject that various facets of it must perforce be presented separately if they are to be understood at all clearly. The difficulties experienced by boys in attaining the accepted male role and the inherent weaknesses of the role itself are particularly relevant to this special issue. (The actual process of sex-role socialization and the problems of the traditional female role will be covered in later issues.)

The fact that the majority of boys and men seem to prefer the masculine role is by no means an indication that all is well in the state of Denmark. Something is certainly rotten, though most men are so content with the status and importance that go with being male that they are largely unaware of the subtle factors that work to their disadvantage.

Researchers who have been studying the process and effects of socialization have come to feel that there are two basic problems in male role socialization.

Firstly, it is thought that boys experience more difficulties than girls in learning appropriate role behaviour. Secondly, the validity of the accepted masculine role is highly questionable, in that it places unnatural demands and pressures on males and is so confining and narrow that it tends to stunt them emotionally.

WHAT ARE LITTLE BOYS MADE OF?

A SAMPLE OF THE RESPONSES OF A GROUP OF CHILDREN IN BOMBAY WHO WERE ASKED TO TELL US WHAT THEY THOUGHT WERE THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN GIRLS AND BOYS.

BOY: "Boys should be able to be better in atheletics, games, etc., more witty, have a better presence of mind, be more fluent in speaking and look more smart than girls. Girls should be better cooks, should sing better, should have a better sense of choosing clothes, etc., more pretty. . ."

BOY: "Girls should learn to play games that are not rough. . . Boys can abuse their sister or other girls but the girls are scolded if they do the same to boys. . . Girls can play with dolls, boys can't. . . Boys should play games like cricket and football, run faster, be better in mathematics, and help other people better than girls. Girls should be able to cook and knit better."

BOY: "Boys should never be sissies, never be scared. . . They can get away or cover up their mistakes and crimes; they can survive injuries or be able to stand dirty bloody scenes, which girls can't. . . Girls should never overdo things, they should never behave like boys, have some limit to what they say, and never should demand things from boys. Girls can get away from hittings or canings from their friends, brothers or parents. Boys should work and help people better than girls. They should be braver than girls. Girls should be able to work in the house, that is, the kitchen, and do many small household matters better than boys can. They should be loving and generous in all ways. . ."

GIRL: "All boys should be able to work hard and have strength for self-defence. Help their sisters and brothers if they have any. Boys should never take advantage of their strength and bully girls; they should never tease girls. Boys can get away with mischief which girls can't. If girls do any mischief everybody says don't act like a boy. All girls should be able to work, cook, be active, and have strength and also have an ambitions. Girls usually get away from hard work by saying that only boys can do it, and they are weak. But I do not actually believe in the above statement as girls should also work hard. . ."

GIRL: "Boys should be confident and sure of what they want from life. They should be gentlemen in the proper sense. Boys can move along steadily with many girls at the same time and not feel guilty about it. A girl gives her heart to one person only. Boys don't have to suffer 9 months of pregnancy. Boys can play the fool; it is considered natural. A girl can't. Boys get away from household work. Girls should maintain their dignity. To remain simple, modest and dignified is what girls should be. Girls should never be flirty, talkative and easily excitable. In school, masters or tutors have a soft corner for girls and so they can get away from severe punishments. . ."

GIRL: "Boys are considered the only ones to pass comments at a movie while girls are considered ridiculous if they whistle. A boy can get away with asking a girl out whereas it is never forgotten if a girl asks a boy out."

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GROWING UP MALE

The urgent need for change is obviously in the basic concept of the male role itself. But the change will predictably be slow in coming and, in the meantime, little boys will continue to experience difficulties in attaining the role they are expected to slip smoothly into, unless parents and other adults he comes into regular contact with are sensitive to his problems and help him through them. This is why it is important in the present context to understand the built-in difficulties boys encounter in the sex-role learning process.

The initial parental identification of all children is generally with the mother — not surprisingly, since even today mothers are more intimately involved with the bringing up of babies than are fathers. The problems start when, in order to conform to the male role, as he is expected to, boys have to shift from the early identification with the mother and establish the necessary masculine role identification.

This is easier said than done because in the contemporary world there is a dearth of real life male role models for young boys to observe and imitate. Fathers are typically available to children for fewer hours per day than mothers, and even when they are home, few of them even today participate in as many intimate activities with the child (such as preparing him for bed, toileting etc.) as the mother does. Since both the time spent with the child and the intimacy and intensity of the contact are pertinent to the process of learning parental identification, it is obvious that little boys are at a disadvantage here. As one psychologist puts it, "The father as a role model for the child is analogous to a map showing the major outline, but lacking most details."

To make matters worse, the demands on boys to conform to the masculine role come much earlier than for girls, at an age when they are barely able to even understand it, and they are much harsher as well. Also, the pressure on boys to conform is much more severe than the pressure on girls. A tomboyish girl is generally more acceptable, and tolerated for longer, than a sissy boy.

As if this were not bad enough, the male role is 'defined' for boys mostly through negative admonishments. Boys are told not to be sissies but are given no precise indication as to what they are supposed to be. This form of proscriptive rather than prescriptive training, especially when it is backed by strong disapproval of and sometimes even punishment for non-masculine behaviour, is not only a largely ineffective teaching method, but one that makes the whole process more traumatic than it need or should be.

To top it all, the male role is defined for boys primarily by their mothers and their predominantly female teachers (the dearth of male teachers in the early years eliminates the possibility of male role models even in school). The masculine role thus presented to boys is conventional and stereotyped — much more so that it would be if they had live role models they could observe and imitate, since even the most traditional man performs outside his role and as a plain human being at least once in a while.

So boys are required to conform to a culturally defined and therefore extremely rigid, mostly unrealistic, male role. Achieving such a super-masculine role is difficult in itself. Combined with the poor training method, it gives rise to considerable anxiety concerning appropriate sex-role behaviour, which is perhaps one of the reasons why boys as well as adult men seem to be so preoccupied with proving their 'manliness'.

Further, the continual discouragement and disapproval of 'feminine' behaviour could, according to some psychologists, result in boys suppressing such behaviour without necessarily unlearning them — so that underneath the overt masculine behaviour of males lies their original feminine role identification. The insecurity that would obviously result from such a discrepancy could lead to all sorts of negative consequences, such as over-conformity to the male role (with perhaps even a predisposition to violence) and negative attitudes to women. These psychologists suggest that men fear and try to control women because they fear the feminine part of their own identity (generated by their early attachment to the mother) and, more generally, because boys are socialized to be masculine largely by avoiding

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GROWING UP MALE

femininity (i.e., since "girl-like" activities lead to disapproval or ridicule, boys come to dislike these and later develop hostility toward females as a whole as representatives of the disliked role).

If these undesirable results are to be minimized and the sex role learning process made less traumatic for boys, certain changes are required.

For example, parental identification would become less of a problem if the role of men in childcare were increased not only in terms of the quantum of time spent with the child but in terms of equal responsibility and intimacy. Another helpful course of action would be to take the pressure off very young boys, to leave them be till they can at least understand the concepts. Next, if at all they must conform to accepted sex role standards, they should be given positive instructions and explanations rather than the negative admonishments that now prevail. And certainly, care should be taken to see that boys do not develop negative attitudes to feminine behaviour and females in general, since that would only complicate relationships with women in adult life.

These and similar precautions are, of course, only stop-gap measures to make life simpler and less traumatic for little boys while the more basic changes required in our concepts of man and woman — male, female — take place. For change is what is really needed: a drastic reevaluation of traditional concepts about men and women and their roles in society.

Of course, there has been some change in the accepted concept of the male role over the years. But these have done little to take the pressure off boys and men. The 'modern' male role is not only just as stringent, it brings in its wake a host of additional problems because of the dichotomy contained in traditional and modern versions of the masculine role.

Some of the paradoxes are apparent. Traditionally and in popular imagery, it is physical strength and accomplishment that are crucial to masculine achievement, but the kinds of achievement most rewarded in men by

Brahm Dev

If men played a greater, more intimate, part in their children's lives, the male role might not be so rigidly defined and restricted.

world of management, or politics, for example) require intellectual and interpersonal skills more than anything else. Again, in the traditional male role, emotional skills are relatively undeveloped, and feelings of tenderness and vulnerability are especially prohibited; anger and impulsive behaviour are encouraged, especially with other males, and are even looked upon as proof of masculinity. By contrast, the modern male is expected to have a capacity for tenderness and emotional intimacy (though only in romantic, heterosexual relationships — it is expressly forbidden elsewhere), and anger and impulsive behaviour are particularly prohibited — staying 'cool' is a major value.

Traditional and modern male roles also entail different relationships with women and men. For example, while the traditional male expects his wife to acknowledge and defer to his authority in all matters (the marital relationship being in the main functional), the modern male tends to expect women to soothe his wounds and replenish his emotional reserves (heterosexual relationships being his only ac-

support). In a similar contradiction, the traditional male role prescribes that men have strong emotional bonds to other men, while in the modern male role, emotional relationships with other men are weak and often absent.

These contrary demands present a whole new bundle of pressures for the growing boy.

Some psychologists suggest that the problem lies in the fact that while traditionally men were expected to be instrumental, now they are expected to be expressive as well, that the two expectations lead to role strain because they conflict with each other and cannot be satisfied simultaneously. Others feel the problem is that males tend to be socialized in childhood for a traditional male role and then, in adulthood, find themselves measured against the standard of the modern male role.

Valid as these views undoubtedly are, the perspective that really gets to the root of the problem is one which holds that males would experience role strain even if they were consistently socialized for the modern male role — a strain between modern male role

demands and more fundamental personality needs. This is the crux of the problem. It is this kind of role strain that led women to question the validity of society's definition of the female role.

Of course, the inherent limitations and constraints of the modern male role are not immediately obvious, partly because it is a contemporary phenomenon and too close to us to be seen in perspective, and partly because the obvious advantages of the male role tend to obscure the disadvantages and make men complacent.

But it is clear that males need, for example, to be allowed, perhaps helped, to become aware of the depth of their need for affection, intimacy, love and tenderness. They need to develop deeper emotional contact with other men and with children, and to get away from the exclusive channeling of their emotional needs to relationships with women. They also need to make their self-esteem less dependent on their work and earning power.

The more one finds out about the masculine role and the process through which little boys are expected to be transformed into The Ideal Man, the more complex, futile and harmful it appears. Both men and women suffer from being typecast as they are now. And the socialization process which moulds children into these conventional roles is an anxiety-producing process for both boys and girls, chiefly because it requires them both to conform to rigid sex-role standards that are often in conflict with their individual temperaments or preferences.

The trouble is, ideas about sex-roles are formed so early and so unconsciously (thanks to socialization) that we grow up believing that differential sex behaviours are linked up in biology and hence insusceptible to change. But sex roles are **not** immutable. Even now there they are in a state of flux, however negligible. Unfortunately, whatever modifications have come about seem to more apparent than real. Men even today persist in reserving aggression and dominance for themselves and females still disapprove of the male who adopts traditionally feminine mannerisms, traits and/or activities. This must change, and crucial to this change is the elimination of rigid sex-role socialization — so that we can bring up our children at least to be free to be human.

The Indian Male In Folklore

Continued from page 15

away. Here again Nala is said to be under the influence of a curse, but his action does not enhance his personality as a king.

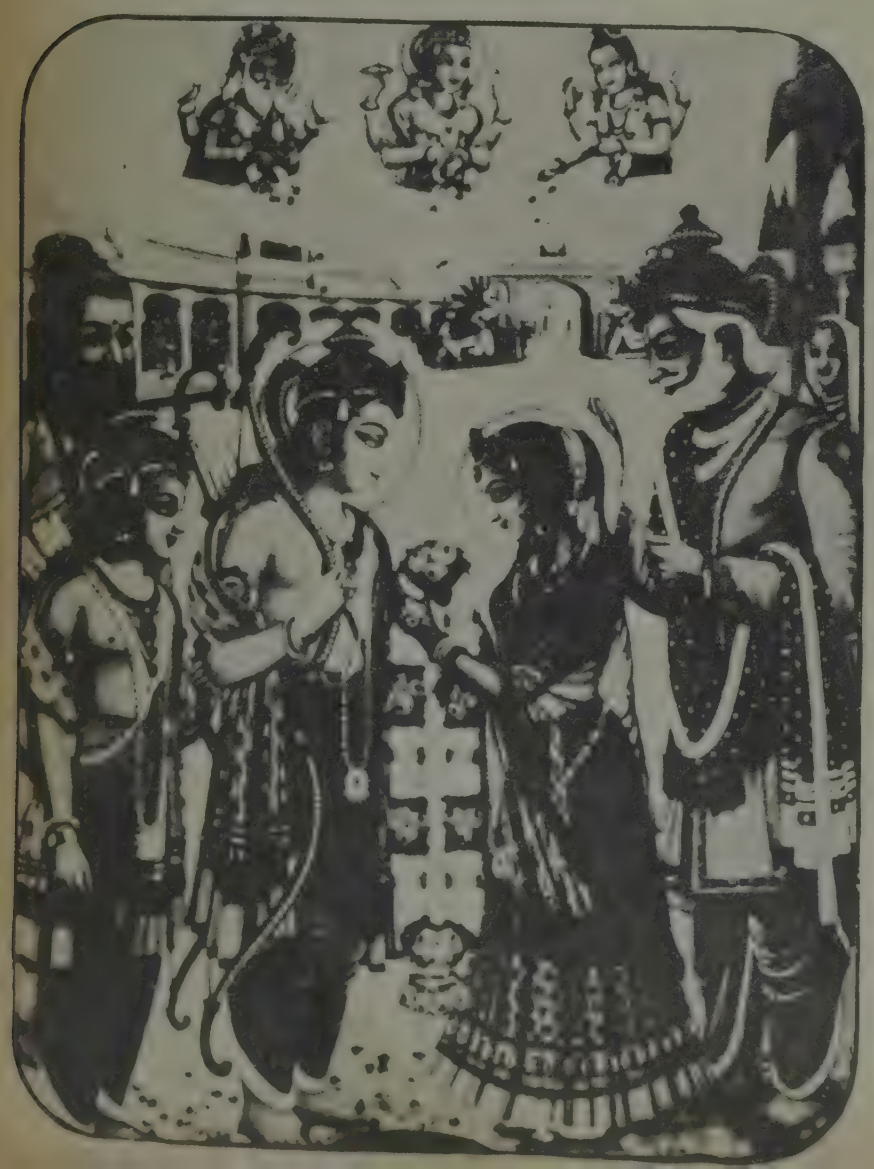
In fact, the entire chain of events in **Mahabharata** or **Ramayana** may be justified as the result of fate or curses, but these are only literary contrivances. The personality of a character in a literary work must be created and developed through his own thoughts and actions within the structure of the plot.

Although the effeminate characteristics of the heroes in the legends may be justified on the basis of the religious and philosophical trends of the times, what cannot be justified is their total absorption in the game of love throughout their life, or the lack of initiative and decisive action when faced with the crises of their lives. Vikramaditya and Arjuna are two of the great heroes known for their prowess. Yet most of the tales of Vikramaditya are descriptions of the king's conquest of women— Vikramaditya had more than 1,000 wives in his harem and many more concubines for his pleasure. Arjuna is described as a perfect example of manhood, who does not have even the remnants of nipples on his chest! At the time when he and his family are in exile in the forest, Arjuna has to go on a **teerth yatra.** Arjuna proves his greatness by marrying a large number of women, during his pilgrimage of penance!

King Yudhishtira is said to be born of Lord Yama, and heads the family of the Pandavas. Yet he loses his wealth and the honour of his family in a petty game of dice and during the battle of Kurukshetra does not hesitate to utter a lie when it is necessary!

The women of the legends, on the other hand, are resourceful, full of spirit. When Draupadi fights for her rights as a woman and tries to defend her honour in the assembly of the Kauravas, the images of all the men fall before her personality. Of all the members of her family, she alone waited for her revenge with "unmombed tresses" for 14 years.

Arjuna winning Draupadi. He proves his greatness and manliness by marrying a large number of women — during his pilgrimage of penance.



LEFT: Ram marrying Sita. He drags her around during his 14-year exile, forces her into agni-pariksha to prove her chastity and finally exiles her because of a dhobi's remark.

The heroines of all our traditional tales, such as Sita, Ganga, Urvashi, Shakuntala and many others were separated from their husbands. Yet they had the courage to live, to bring up their children as it was their right as woman. Some of them joined their husbands, like Urvashi and Shakuntala, and some of them like Sita and Ganga did not return to their homes. But there was a definite determination in their thought, and a code of principles which they tried to follow.

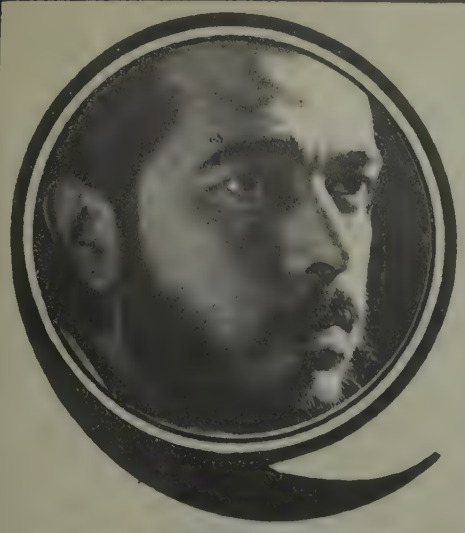
We can see the same courage of their convictions in the women of Rajasthan, as depicted in their folk songs and legends. How far was the King of Mewar able to understand or protect his wife, the saint poetess Mirabai? The queens often were the source of inspiration to the kings, as is told in the tale of the queen who beheaded herself so that her husband would leave her side and go to the battlefield.

The tale of Satyavan and Savitri shows Satyavan as a good but a weak man, unable to protect his kingdom, his parents or look after his wife. He is a victim of fate but his wife has the wit and courage not only to regain his life, but also the lost wealth, kingdom and the well-being of her husband's parents.

There are innumerable tales that are retold in the villages of India today, in different languages, under different environments. Sociological and psychological changes in society may have changed their original intent.But a deeper analysis of these stories will show many a woman, warm-blooded, self-willed, conscious of herself as an individual, while man emerges as a colourful, gorgeously robed, robust figure, and yet a pawn in the hands of women, games of fortune and, above all, fate. This is not a fanciful thought of a modern writer — the image created by the men of letters was true. These were the men who lay dormant through centuries under a series of foreign dominations, as the history of India shows.

THE HE-MAN IS CRUMBLING

Continued from page 9



SAEED MIRZA
Film Director; Script Writer

"The he-man. . . strong, unsentimental, or hiding his sentiments behind an undemonstrative exterior. . . sentiments are for the 'weaker' sex. . . It's obviously one more cliche. This image of men is obviously there for a definite reason. It's been created by men for men: women read Barbara Cartland, men read. . . whatever. . . but that whatever is solid action-oriented stuff, serious reading matter and so on. . . but it's false, false all through." He laughed and went on, "When the American film 'Love Story' was shown, most of the men I know thought it was a good film, most of the women said it was Hollywood at its worst."

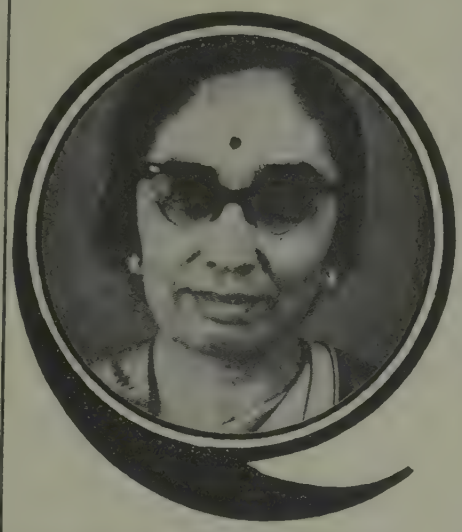
It is significant, Mirza pointed out, that most of the really sentimental books, take 'Love Story' itself, are written by men. . . "...But of course, the male characters are shown to have, somewhere, a streak of hard-headedness, of 'fight' in them, the women, even the most sensible, genuinely hard-headed ones are. . . oh so soft!" He smiled, derisively. Then, seriously, "The evil of this is that it doesn't allow either men or women to be fully human. . . women are treated as inferiors and men try to live up to an image, they can't be fully human...

"It has been this way ever since woman was assigned a role outside the productive process," he stated cryptically. Elucidating, he continued, "Ever since society was divided into classes — into those who own property, own means of production, and those who slog for these propertied classes. Ever since then men have treated women as a subsidiary sex, as weaker, and promoted themselves as the stronger sex." True, he agreed, a good proportion of women, especially working class women, are today actively engaged in positively contributing to the economic life of the country and proving themselves the equals of men. But though that provides a material base for ideas to change, they will not "just change".

"See, women have been working even in previous social systems. Yet they are treated with . . . with. . . as inferior. Because in the propertied classes the women did not work. . . because women bear children and because of the accompanying problems and periodical physical weaknesses, it was easy for the rich men to justify — since they had the means — the restriction of women to the house and licence to the man. Among these classes the men alone went out to work; so naturally they could proclaim themselves the breadwinners. They could claim greater strength than women. And these seemed justified because the upper class women were . . . are. . . coddled. . . Because they were in power, they set the 'fashions', the culture and the values of the society. So it became 'traditional' for men to be 'he-men' and for women to be merely housewives, to lack an independent social life quite apart from their men."

After a small frowning silence, he said "Well, men are benefiting from the present state of affairs, aren't they?...They are actively engaged in social activities, their personal lives being comfortably arranged by wives, mothers. . . as 'he-men' they can dominate, psychologically at least. . . Obviously, it was. . . Is. . . necessary for men as much as women to scrap all these traditional values. But throwing away these traditional evaluations will mean throwing away most of the present culture. Because the present system follows a culture that insults women, dehumanizes men, sells people. To reject any part of it is to reject the whole. It necessarily means to reject the present culture with all its social prejudices, castes, idolatry, and therefore necessarily means to get rid of the power of those who strive to continue this culture in fact, whatever they may mouth."

In the two films that Saeed Mirza has directed ('Arvind Desai Ki Ajeeb Dastaan', to be shortly released, and 'Albert Pinto Ko Kyon Gussa Ata Hai?', not yet completed) his women characters are shown to be realistic and strong rather than the commonly pursued fallacy that they are "emotional and sentimental". His Albert Pinto is the one who weeps at film shows.



SHANTA RAO
Director, Institute of Research and Reproduction

She was refreshing. She was simple, yet the most involved in her comments, personally involved — mentally and emotionally. She is Director of the Institute of Research and Reproduction, an institute largely initiated and built up by herself over the last 20 years or so. But unlike most successful women, Shanta Rao was deeply understanding of and sympathetic to "the lack of problems that men face — no housework, no nursing of their children. . . they experience life less in a way, but benefit more in a way." She was married while in high school. "My in-laws were exceptionally good. Especially my mother-in-law. Largely because of her I studied for a bachelor's degree in Science, then a Master's. I went to Canada with my husband on a fellowship to study Immunology . . .by the time I finished studying I had three children."

Her mother-in-law was among the most cooperative and progressive of women. "Yet little things would come up. . . like if I asked my husband to drop some dirty clothes in the wash basin — not to wash, only to leave them there in the soapy water or whatever — she wouldn't like it. . .

"This is the problem women face. Where they are working women, they face unequal competition from their male colleagues because these men go home and read, study further or rest and study later. Women go home and work.

"In this, men must cooperate. There can be no solution unless men come forward to offer to share the work, insist on equal liberty for the woman to study and pursue her career as he does his. The family must not — must never — suffer. And only if men cooperate can the responsibility for the children and home be well met while careers flourish."

Maybe, she suggested, greater opportunities for part-time jobs could be arranged for women, though such an ideal is still in the future. But men must progress and progress fast so that "the wealth of talent and intelligence wasted by and among the women at present. . . the waste of women's brains can be stopped. . .

"This talent and ability needs to be recognised. . . and that, without much delay."

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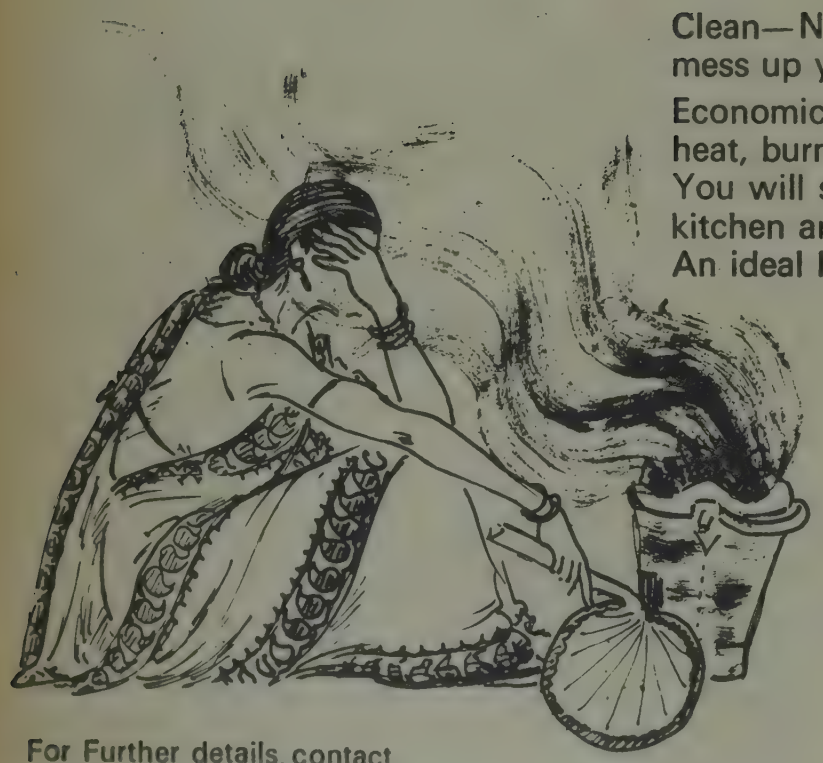

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RAPE

Continued from page 29

predisposed to psychopathic aggression the stage is set for gang rape.

Gang rape is not such a rare phenomenon as one would imagine. Menachem Amir reports that 43 per cent of the rapes among his sample in Philadelphia were committed by more than one man. Nor is it true that only women get raped. Homosexual rape reflects an even more powerful need to terrorize and humiliate. It has little to do with the rapist's sexual orientation — only with his need to prove his own masculinity at the expense of anothers'.

While according to the present system of sexual values, man is expected to dominate, woman has been provided with an unwritten code of conduct which is her 'feminity'. She is expected to be passive, is projected as being unable to think, unable to act, unable to make decisions about her life; in short, to be the object, not the initiator, of any behaviour. And man not only has to be taller than her, stronger than her, cleverer than her, he also has to prove his mettle by being her protector.

Each girl as she grows into womanhood is taught the fear of rape. Rape, the threat of rape and the fear of rape are forms of physical and mental violence that have been used to force women to look to men for their protection. In the guise of fear woman internalizes the values of both male chivalry as well as her own passivity. Feminists argue that the whole business of chivalry has been designed to give man power over women. **Susan Griffith** defines chivalry as "an age-old protection racket which depends for its existence on the threat of rape."

The concept of power is the key to the male ego which derives its strength in terms of comparative, not intrinsic, values. The man who earns enough to support himself and his family is not successful; he is middle-class. The successful man is the one who earn more, who owns more possessions — car, fridge, TV, telephone — who has more people working for him. The middle-class man may, in fact, be a more complete person. But even he cannot perceive himself as masculine unless he wields power rally comes down to 'his' woman or the women in his family.

Society encourages the concept of woman as an object possessed by man. In her youth a girl is Mr. So-and-so's daughter, after marriage she is Mr. So-and-so's wife and after her children grow up she is Mr. So-and-so's mother. **Claude Levi-Strausse** describes marriage as a "system of exchange" in which woman is "the most precious possession." A possession, nonetheless.

Kate Millet writes: "Traditionally rape has been viewed as an offence one male commits against another — a matter of abusing his woman." In the act of rape the anger of a man frustrated by society is deflected onto a female scapegoat and he enhances his sense of manhood by being one up against another.

This objectification of woman and the separation of sexual feelings from the positive emotions of love and nurturing are the underlying causes behind all acts that could be called rape. Rape is a violation of a person's sexu- right to choose the sexual experience. Taken in a wider context it would include the leers whistles, pinches and pats that are both humiliating for women and are also an invasion of her personal integrity and privacy.

Neither prisons nor laws can prevent rape. What is required is a long process of socio-psychological change so that society produces fewer persons with distorted needs and distorted self-concepts. But only when man begins to perceive his strength within himself and not in the weakness of his mate will any change in the social fabric not threaten him with feelings of inadequacy. And for that man needs to be liberated as much as woman.

* * *

Since there has been little or no reliable data on rape in India the writer regrets having to quote Western studies. However, since our society is at least as male-dominated as the West, a comparative evaluation might not be totally irrelevant.

THE PEACOCK PREENS !

Continued from page 45

shouldn't men go in for changes too? Abroad, and even in India now, you find men going in for a complete over-hauling — manicure, pedicure and hair-styling — many of the handsome stars you see on screen or at a fashion show have gone through all this. A man can completely change his looks and thus personality with the right styling of his hair — for example if he looks a bit square in straight hair than a light perm could do wonders for him.

I personally love glamour and have at every stage of my professional career on stage done hours of painstaking experimenting in make-up, wig styling and costumes, to get the result of absolute perfection. I'm glad men have woken up and realised they can look a lot more handsome and dashing and create a change in themselves by visiting a saloon."

Farid Tejani, the handsome young owner cum salesman of an exclusive shoe shop in Bombay says, "Of course guys have become more conscious, and why not? A guy also has the right to look decent. I have noticed that men now spend a much longer time over buying a pair of shoes and they ask many questions about the quality of leather and the latest styles. They even go in for more expensive pairs.

Dilip Narang is the owner of a fashionable leather shop in Bombay. He says, "One of the best things that has happened on the Indian fashion scene recently is the new dress-consciousness among Indian men. If you just glance around you will notice that the Indian male is more smartly turned out now than five years or ten years ago. In downtown Bombay, some of the men are extremely fashion-conscious, because styles that hit Europe are here in no time.

One of the most encouraging factors and a welcome change is the carrying of bags by men. This is one of the major fashion changes of the decade. In this, my shop is going to play an important part. Very soon we will have 20 different styles of bags, exclusively designed for men. A range to suit practically every man who is conscious of being in the news. It is certainly a healthy sign and something which should stay and grow."

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MEN IN CRISIS

IS THERE A MALE MENOPAUSE? DO ALL MEN REACT "MANFULLY" IN A CRISIS? OF COURSE THEY DO NOT — AND SHOULD NOT. SOME MEN ARE CLEAR-HEADED IN THE MIDST OF CRISIS, SOME BECOME CONFUSED AND ACT HELPLESS WHEN UNDER STRESS

Carlos Welch

His whole body was bent in abject grief as he sat holding his face in his hands. He spoke to me very softly, "Why? Why did this happen to him? He was the happy one in our family." Ramesh went on pouring out his grief over the death of his two-and-a-half-year-old son. Slowly, while he talked, he let his tears flow as he remembered the joyful experiences he had shared with his son. Through the next two days, he slowly worked through his grief, in between taking care of his household responsibilities, his wife and two older children.

Ramesh faced the crisis of the loss of his son by working through his grief and taking up the routine of his life. From time to time, when he met a friend or relative who reminded him of his son, he would feel the pain again. But each time the intensity would be reduced and after a few days, he was able to remember and talk about his son with a sense of gratitude for the happy occasions he had shared with the boy.

Men face various crises in their development, beginning in childhood and extending until the final crisis of their death. Along the way they also experience accidental crises, such as the inability to obtain employment, or the sickness of a relative. Developmental and accidental crises follow a predictable pattern; however, different persons respond to crisis in different ways.

Adulthood begins with men facing two major crises — getting work and establishing their marriage. Once work is obtained, there is the crisis of adapting to the work situation. Some men adapt easily and respond sensitively to the expectations of their supervisors and the job. Other men live with an edge of anxiety, wondering what will be expected of them next. Some men very quickly become defensive, narrowly define their tasks and rebel against expectations which do not fit their definitions. Different men respond to the crisis of becoming established in their work in different ways.

The same is true with the establishment of marriage and the family.

Ramamurthy's parents selected a bride for him from among their acquaintances. After the selection was made, they called him from New Delhi where he worked and celebrated the marriage. After the usual wedding festivities, the couple got acquainted with each other during the long train journey from Madras to Delhi. They settled into their two-room flat and began to work out the routine of their daily life.

At first, Ramamurthy was concerned about leaving his wife alone all day. They got acquainted with neighbouring women and established a routine. Ramamurthy provided information about how he could be contacted if an emergency arose. He enjoyed introducing his wife to shopping in Delhi and they often shared amusing incidents which filled their letters to their parents. Occasionally, they were in conflict over differences with regard to the budgeting of their household funds. However, they learned to give and take and within a few months were happy and stable in their marriage.

In contrast, Ashok, who worked in the same office with Ramamurthy, found marriage complex and unmanageable. He had been in conflict with his elder brother over the selection of his bride. When they both finally agreed, the astrologer raised objections indicating that the horoscopes did not match. After two years of searching, a bride who met most of the conditions was found. During these two years Ashok had faced many crises and fluctuated between elation and despair.

He brought his bride to Delhi and she was very unhappy with living in the city. She grieved for her parents and spent most of her time when Ashok was around talking about her family. Ashok felt disappointed and thought that he had been cheated. Slowly, he and his wife settled into a routine of dissatisfaction and duty. Ashok became active in a club and remained away from home as much as possible.

Ashok and Ramamurthy reacted to the crisis of marriage in different ways. So did their brides. Each one of them functioned in a crisis according to the person they had become.

Some persons react in a crisis by coping with the issues and settling difficulties with their resources. Other persons respond to crisis by blocking their thinking with emotions and withdrawing into worry and fantasy.

Some men learn while growing up to express their feelings, think clearly and make decisions in the midst of crisis. Most men, however, learn to suppress their feelings, and so become confused and act helpless when under stress. Still others learn to hide their feelings and cope with problems while building up tension inside, conforming to the myths which maintain that men do not show emotions, and that being cool in a crisis is more manly! There is also a myth that men go through a male menopause in their fifties. There is no scientific basis for such a belief. However, the crises a man experiences in his fifties are often so intense and numerous that he finds coping more difficult in that stage of his life. He is often under the pressure of intense competition at work, the necessity of settling his children in marriage and work, caring for his parents and facing their death, building a house and providing for his retirement — all at the same time! With so many crises, it is no wonder that many men exhibit behaviour different from what they have revealed previously. Though there is no physiological change to support the myth of a male menopause, the complexity of crises may be such that men reveal aspects of their personality which lead to belief in the phenomenon.

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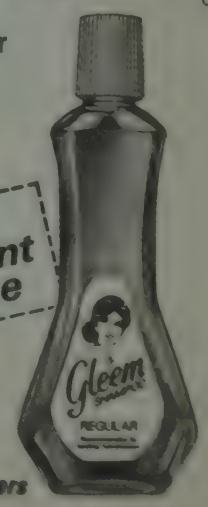

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MEN IN CRISIS

CONDITIONED TO PUT UP A BRAVE FRONT IN A CRISIS, MAN HAS TO SUPPRESS HIS EMOTIONS. WHAT DO MEN THEMSELVES HAVE TO SAY ABOUT THIS?

CRYING WITHOUT TEARS

Bharat Savur

From the time he is a child, society in the form of parents, relations, etc., tell him that he should not cry; that "Men are ruled by their heads, women by their heart"; that a man does not cry. A noblesse oblige that makes him bear his emotional crosses silently as he goes through life. And the beginning of the chest-out-chin-up-stiff-upper-lip-wear-the-mask-almost- masochist male syndrome that throws a man's emotions into a mental pressure cooker without the safety valve of tears. No wonder that lids are sometimes flipped.

Death, the great leveller, is not always the same emotional equallizer for those it leaves behind to mourn the passing of a dear one. The evening before his grandmother passed away, Basu cried unabashedly in the privacy of his bedroom. He was the only dry-eyed family member at the funeral the next morning. Ten years later, he still does not know what it was — the state of shock or the early conditioning that prevented him from showing grief.

On the other hand, L.R. lost his wife in a road accident. He was so depressed that he went on a booze binge. It was only after two years had gone by that he sobered up to the fact that all the liquor in the world would not bring back his dead wife and began to pick up the pieces of his life. L.R. is happily remarried today. Looking back, he said, "Maybe if I had really let myself go and had a good cry, I would never have taken to drinking for such a long time. But there's no doubt that booze did help initially."

Alka, who lost her husband in similarly tragic circumstances, bore up magnificently for the sake of her children. Within a month she had taken up a job and become both mother and father to her children. It is hardly fair to sit in judgments on such personal things as love and grief or even to generalize as to whether men or women stand up better to unexpected deaths. However, maternity appears to be a strong mooring with practicality and reality. There are many cases of young widows going through life virtually singlehandedly. Many widowers, on the other hand, tend to remarry, probably because it is comparatively easier for a man to remarry and possibly also to avoid the emotional and social insecurity of single status.

Heartbreaks, terminated romances and unrequited love do not distinguish between the sexes. And the reactions of both men and women who have lost the love of their life remains generally the same.

T.K. was well past the puppy love stage, when the girl who had been his 'steady' for eight years was compelled by her family to marry another man. T.K., who had already lost his heart, lost his head too and threatened to show his ex-steady's love letters to her in-laws-to-be in an effort to stop the marriage.

That the stronger shoulder should bear the heavier financial burden makes good sense in any text-book on the 'Principles of Economics'. Unfortunately, educational and economic emancipation of the 'weaker sex' has cast an even heavier load on the male. The emotional emancipation of a man has not even begun. Very few men can accept the fact that a wife might in some cases earn more than a man. Society too comes down hard on an unemployed man who through no fault of his might have to depend on his wife's earnings. He is condemned as a near-gigolo. And the experience often assumes the proportions of a major emotional crisis.

Mr. V.S. while studying for a Ph.D. in an American University was hard put to support his wife who ultimately took up a clerical job. He left the campus and took a bed-sitter in the city as he could not face his neighbours, after wondering as to what they thought of him for studying while his wife worked.

The Hindu middle class does not take kindly to a man and wife living with her parents. The term 'ghar jamhai' used to describe such an arrangement, which virtually means a parasite. It is ironic that a son-in-law is permitted to take dowry or be presented with a furnished flat under the euphemism "of starting life", but condemned for doing neither; and for merely living with, as opposed to off, his in-laws.

Anand, who returned to India after a long stay overseas, says, "Since we couldn't find a place of our own, we stayed with my wife's parents. Believe me, those three months were real hell. Papu's relations never left us in peace. They made me feel like I was committing a crime. I was better off in the States. . ." Anand has now taken up a paying-guest accommodation at Vakola. The sooner the myth of man being the sole breadwinner and his wife the sole breadmaker is destroyed, the better it will be for society, in general, and married couples, in particular.

Illness and old age problems are other traumas that mentally and emotionally affect men much more than women. Brought up on the tradition of looking after the weaker sex, it is hard to accept the fact that God or Nature has reversed man's role from protector to protected. Mr. K.D., a self-made industrialist, was stricken with paralysis when in the prime of life. Now confined to a wheelchair, he is sometimes extremely upset that he cannot go to the toilet or change his clothes on his own. His wife, who helps him do these things, is subjected to his temper and tantrums.

In everyday life too, a man may blow his top if he does not get what he is used to. Usha Trivedi, a middle-class housewife said, "My husband is used to having two spoonfuls of sugar in his morning coffee. There was a time when sugar went completely off the market and we had to use jaggery instead. Ravi refused to drink coffee, and breakfast became a trying time for the family." The normally cool and calm husband also loses his shirt if his newspaper is not beside his breakfast plate, or if his brand of cigarettes is not available.

D.F., an executive, feels women have it easier than men. "Take my case," he says. "When I go to the office, I've to forget the troubles at home. And when I come home in the evening after a real trying day, I've to face what I had left in the morning. Can you blame a chap for losing his cool? Okay, so I can't take it out on my boss nor do I like taking it out on my wife. But sometimes I wish to God they'd both leave me alone!"

Shirish, a copy-writer in an advertising agency, goes for a 6.30 show. The film not only helps him to escape from his office tensions, but also gives him time to compose himself and go home in a happier frame of mind. Rusi goes to the club to play a hard game of squash for the same reason, while Faroukh unloads his tensions on the car accelerator while returning home.

N.Shastry sums it up well. "I don't really think you can say men are more emotional or less emotional than women. It all depends on the individual. The most important thing is to be honest to oneself. Personally, I think this strong-and-silent image is a woman's ideal which a man is trying to live up to. For example, my granddaughter Anita never sees Dharmendra's films because she saw him crying in some film. She is a child and will probably grow out of it. But what about older women who still believe in this myth? Don't you think attitudes should change?"

WHY MEN RESENT

WHILE WOMEN TALK OF A MALE-DOMINATED SOCIETY AND THE DOUBLE STANDARDS OF MEN, THE "POOR" MALES ARE UP IN ARMS AT THE RAW DEAL THEY GET WHEN A WOMAN DECIDES TO USE HER SEX TO GET AHEAD

"DO YOU HAVE ANY GROUSES AGAINST WOMEN? DO YOU FEEL THEY GET A BETTER DEAL IN LIFE THAN YOU? . . . CALLING MALE ATTENTION."

In our issue dated March 10, 1979, we had invited our male readers to air their views. The response was overwhelming. Apparently, Women's Lib has not been widely appreciated and males feel they have been given a raw deal. We reproduce below excerpts from some of the letters received by us.

OUR MEN READERS SAY . . .

SHE was everywhere. If it wasn't her charm, it was her tears, or the simple fact that she was a **woman.** The tears I hated most. One day she arrived at the college library much after me — yet took away the book i wanted (that's how small 'I' felt!) . . . Another time I went for the interview, and she got the job. Her low-neck dress left the directors speechless (yes, her dress spoke volumes!) . . . I stood in line for a movie ticket. she simply glided to the counter and walked into air-conditioned comfort even as the 'House Full' board dangled before my eyes like the good luck charm she had on . . . Why was it that WOMAN always walked away with the prize? I had to teach her a lesson. I married her!

— PRAKASH LULLA, Calcutta.

IT seems women are tired of being treated as women, while men are tired of treating women like women. Being a gentleman to their whims and fancies hasn't been easy. The onus has always been on the man to watch his manners. There is no reason why a girl shouldn't hold a door open for a man if she happens to be in a position to do so . . . They want reserved seats and amenities, yet they preach equality between the sexes. Women as a rule start getting the first word early in life and keep it that way. The clothes that women wear are admittedly one of the most potent weapons in the whole armoury of seduction. It is women who subtly make a man deviate from the straight path; and then scream, "He is teasing me!" . . . I do believe that women should receive the same opportunities and treatment as men, provided they are capable of assuming the same responsibilities.

— E. FREY, Bareilly.

I welcome any move showing favour to aged or disabled persons, pregnant women or those with infants in arms, but I vehemently oppose any statutory reservation for women in general, as in buses or queues. In Hyderabad, it is ridiculous to find women having their own entry and exit in a bus. If a couple intends travelling by bus in Hyderabad, they are denied the opportunity of sitting together. In fact, one may not even know that the other has got on if there is a rush! . . . I welcome the Bombay system, where women are treated on par with men; it contributes towards developing a mature relationship, and eliminates eve-teasing.

— H. V. SUDARSHAN, New Delhi.

IN the name of equal status for women. men are deprived of employment opportunities, though the main reason for women to seek employment is that it enables them to buy and decorate themselves with ornaments, cosmetics and attractive attire.

— S. V. UPENDRA CHARYA, Bangalore.

MAN could split the atom, conquer the moon and even develop a test-tube baby, but met his Waterloo while measuring the depth of mystery and secrecy behind Woman. . . They can opt for preferential treatment at any time, and demand equality at other times. If they get jobs, they demand concessions in working conditions. . . They celebrated International Women's Year recently to break away from male chauvinism. But instead of utilizing the opportunity to highlight their hardships and to find solutions, they merely berated males for their ills and sufferings. They are hypocrites and have double standards.

— K. S. RAMAN, New Delhi.

"Billie-Jean really did not know what she was going in for when she played for this Women's Lib movement. Take away this Lib business, and women really have it good!" So spoke P.S., a tennis enthusiast, referring to the fillip given to the women's liberation movement a few years ago by American tennis professional Billie-Jean King's victory over Bobby Riggs, who had claimed that at 55 he could pack more power into his backhand than any of the reigning women champs.

"Perhaps, in Indian society, except in the cities, women are still relatively enslaved by the menfolk, and are expected to be at their beck and call. But in the cities, women have positive advantages over men, which they shamelessly use and then bemoan their lot. Who has ever heard of a woman standing in a queue for tickets if she is accompanied by a male? If you take a quick trip to Bombay's V.T. station, where the Railways have put up a shamiana for issuing tickets on holiday special trains, you will not spot a single female in the long meandering queues! Really, they sit at home; and grumble if tickets for the hoped-for date of departure cannot be managed by the male!"

"The sex appeal that most women inherently have is well exploited by them in almost all spheres of their daily lives," said R.T.T., a college student. "Chivalry is still not dead, though with this Lib movement, maybe it should die a natural death! A lot of men still get up spontaneously when they see a relatively good-looking woman standing in a bus and giving them dolorous looks. We have been taught in college that women are biologically a far stronger sex than men, that they have a longer life expectancy, that they can bear up to stresses and strains better than men, and are less prone to almost any disease. Then why do we call them the 'weaker sex'? My elder sister tells me that some of the free-for-alls that the women have in their special local train compartments would put pro pugilists to shame."

M.D., a senior industry executive, had another point of view. "Why must women get so possessive? I resent my wife's grudging a little extra time spent in the office, or at the gymkhana in the evening for a quick game, or with friends. That I must return to the roost promptly after stumps are drawn in the office for the day, even after eighteen

WOMEN

years of marriage and three children, I find irritating. And the weapons used to keep the errant male in line! Berating, tears that flow like a tap at the touch of a finger, coyness, and, of course, hitting below the belt. My wife is normally a pretty good cook, but if something has been done to annoy her, she cooks stuff that horses wouldn't look at twice. I feel like a schoolboy being awarded demerits for some behavioural aberration!"

"I feel that the male sex should all unanimously support Women's Lib," asserted S.J., another business executive. "Then perhaps there will be more equality, and women will get to realize the advantages they have over men in any, even slightly westernized, society. A little feigned helplessness, a few tears, a little minor flirtation spiced with a pinch of coyness, and women can literally get away with murder. Men cannot use any of these weapons. Imagine a male coyly batting his eyelids at a female! The poor pansy will be dropped in a hurry. Men have always been protective towards women, traditionally, and have been facing the stresses of life in far greater measure than females. And that is how it really should be; how it was ordained.

"Mind you, I am not against the idea of women being given more opportunities to come out into the working arena outside the home. What I resent is the call for equality, when all the time they are at an advantage."

"Oh, I have no resentment at all against women as a sex," said V.R., who has been married for less than a year, and is still in the first fine flush of marital happiness, as he himself puts it. "I like them pottering around, doing their thing. They are basically 'chweet' and charming. and if the world gives them a few advantages like special seats in buses or special queues for tickets, I see no harm at all. After all, are they not the weaker sex?"

And, on this note, which was a direct contradiction to what young R.T.T. had expressed, we decided to ring an end to the interviews . . . .

Shirish Nadkarni

THE attitudes of people with regard to women are seen clearly among the young. Girls can never be bad, you see. Money is generously doled out to the daughter because parents feel it will be spent with reason, since the girls have no vices. Give the boy a little extra, and parents firmly believe that the extra money will mean cigarettes and movies. Males, the privileged sex. my foot!

— SHARAT UCHIL, Bombay.

IT is high time someone started a 'Men's Liberation' movement. A dim-witted female who wiggles her waist carries greater weight in a job interview than a brilliant male candidate with qualications and experience. An objective study of the astonishing difference in the manner in which a man and a woman are treated in identical situations would probably provide enough material for a doctoral thesis in sociology.

— DARSHAN SINGH, Bombay.

THOUGH called the weaker sex, the woman is in fact the stronger one. Women have their way in almost all matters, by any method, be it persuasion, captivating charm, bed manners, etc. Women attract men by various means, and when they respond, call them repulsive. Women have an enormous fund of active and reserve energy, which they fritter away in small talk and petty doings.

— BRAHM P. GUPTA, New Delhi.

WOMEN seem to be perennially condemning their lot. But legally, as otherwise, they are getting a better deal. Both sides of their bread are buttered. For reservations in trains, there are separate ladies' queues. In matrimonial suits, they get the upper hand, as legally, the woman is in a much better position than the man. A divorced wife can get maintenance allowance from her ex-husband. It is easier for a wife to divorce her husband than vice versa. She can create a 'deadlock' in wedlock!

— BHAGWAN SAXENA, New Delhi.

EQUALITY with men — when convenient. That is what women want. In buses, women insist that even old and infirm people vacate seats reserved for women. In offices they get a better deal, when it comes to hard work, arrival on time, sitting late, etc. Women in banks, for example, are offered lighter jobs, even if they are senior officers. Another advantage is that they rarely get transferred out of the city of their choice. It is the men who have to face transfers . . . Lastly, even for heinous crimes committed, society has a soft corner for women.

— RAJU AYYAR, New Delhi.

WOMEN are at the 'receiving end'. From childhood they receive special care, then protection. They receive a selected mate; then their spouse's pay every month. They are protected from the tension and strife of earning the family bread and the desire to forge ahead. They have the alternative to stay at home or work, as they choose. Women have received the boon of black hair well past their middle age, and the gift of a life longer than the average male. They are less prone to hypertension and heart-attacks.

— DR. ARUN KHANNA, Kanpur.

I am not envious of the liberalized opportunities for the female. But when a number of femmes quietly corner a dozen or more tickets outside a movie hall, collect their male entourage and demurely step inside the auditorium while men stand patiently in queues for tickets, then I do feel that equality should reign.

— P. C. BANSAL, Meerut.

WOMEN'S liberation can still be there when a man is working and the woman is looking after the household affairs. Neither of them should think that one of them is superior. Equality should be in the mind of both partners. By having special queues for women, I feel, the distance between males and females is made more. Differences between the sexes have come up due to improper education, traditional social customs and improper training at home. From a young age, equality should be taught . . . The problem of eve-teasing can be solved by having a system of co-education.

— MAHESH KAPASI, New Delhi.

I am sore because in Chandigarh, women are legally permitted to drive two-wheelers without helmets which are compulsory for men; and the Punjab University allows only women candidates to appear privately for various examinations. Why these privileges?

— BALVINDER, Chandigarh.

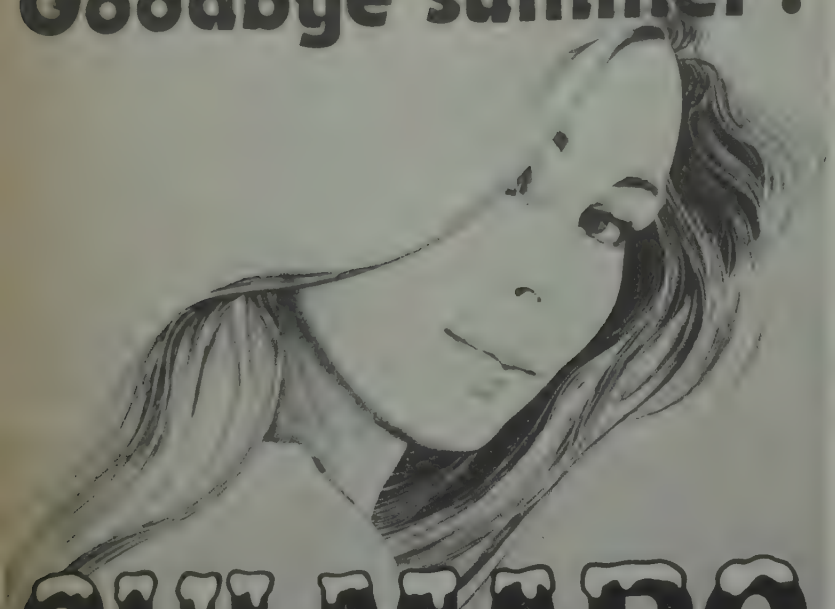
NOT long ago, in Bangalore, police personnel used 'dame cops' who enthralled possible eve-teasers with smiles, only to herd them into waiting vans on approach. Most unfair! City bus transport is another place where our grouses become pronounced — ladies are permitted to get in at odd spots, and board the bus by the 'other door'.

— K. N. T. SASTRY, Bangalore.

THE only resentment against women is that magazines like **Femina, Eve's Weekly** and the like carry on wars against men and demand women's rights, which will disintegrate the Indian family and create unnecessary adverse feelings in women against men.

— S. C. MATHUR, Agra.

Goodbye summer!



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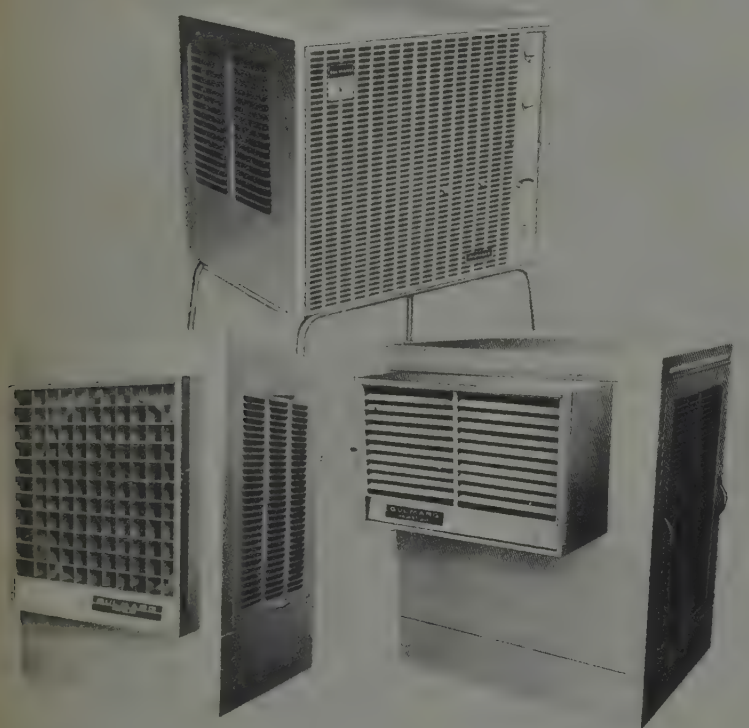

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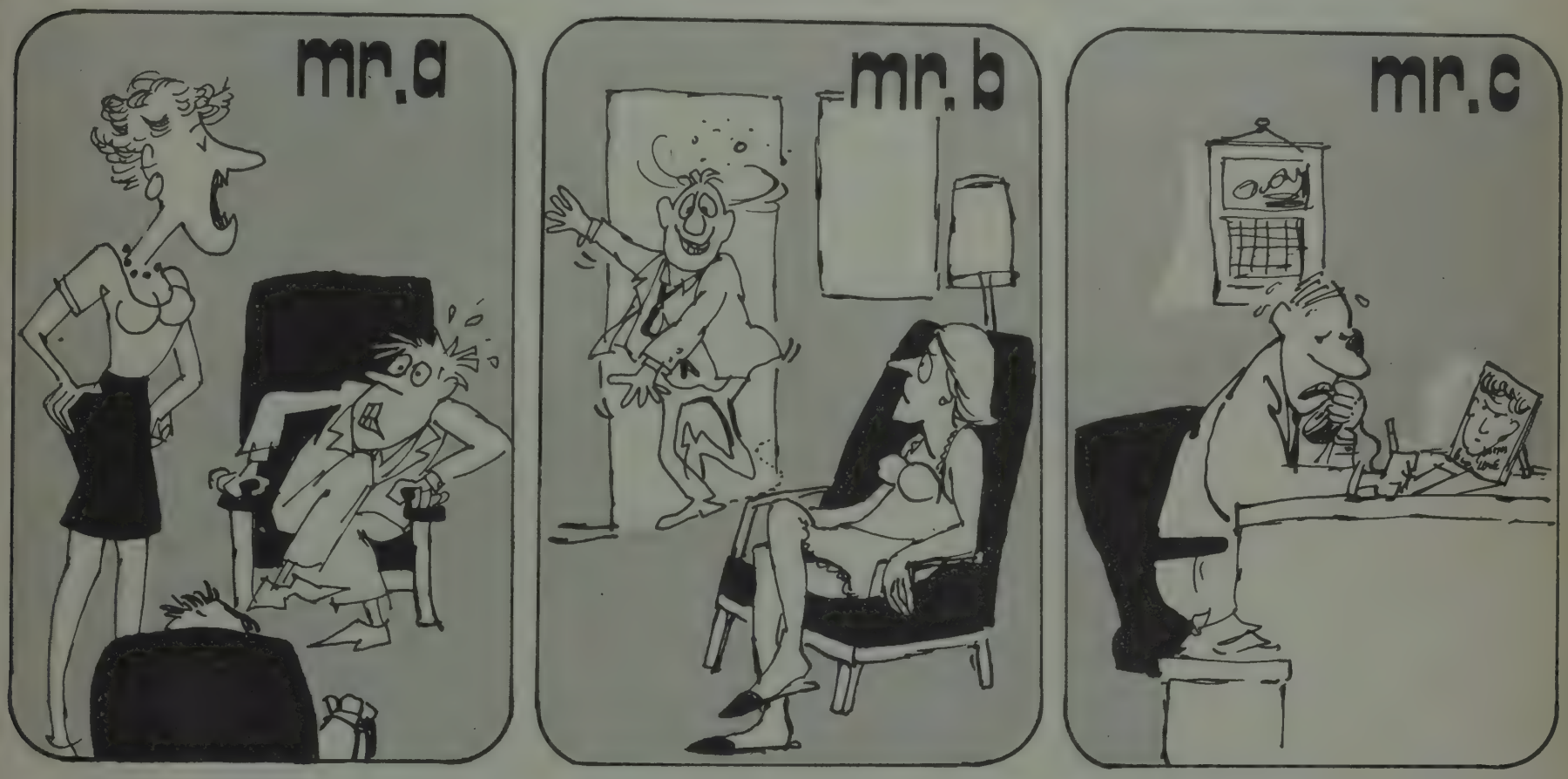
THE MYTH AND THE REALITY OF

THE HEN-PECKED HUSBAND

Aneel Khanna

Mr. A was at a party discussing the recent price-hike vis-a-vis his static income, when his wife butted in and said, "No, that's not the way it is" — as usual not letting him have his say or even complete his sentence. The man, unable to stand the customary onslaught, quietly receded into the background.

Mr. B returned home late in the night quite drunk, entered the house, headed towards the bed, and was soon fast asleep, not realising that his wife had stayed up waiting for him to come home, so that she could have dinner with him. She followed suit, hungry and exhausted.



The morning brought forth no apology from the man.

Mr. C was invited out for dinner at the eleventh hour. Before accepting the invitation he rang up home to confirm with his wife whether the programme suited her.

Most people wrongly bracket the 1st and the 3rd cases together, and term both Mr. A and Mr. C as hen-pecked. While in the first instance Mr. A is truly hen-pecked, the bracketing of Mr. C in the same category, portrays an ignorant, traditional and closed mind. It is a pity that Mr. C is constantly mocked at, and sometimes finally forced into accepting the standard norms. Mr. B remains unaffected, unaltered and is termed A MAN. Mrs. B is society's image of an ideal wife, for she is within an accepted social framework — the cost of her feelings is immaterial.

By any sane standards the third case would be one of healthy companionship but the pathos lies in the fact that often such marriages are forced to go on the rocks, by the constant taunts and sniggers made by traditional male-oriented, perhaps envious, relatives and friends. Who in reality is a hen-pecked husband? Isn't there correspondingly a "cock-pecked" (?) woman?

ANY MAN WHO "LISTENS" TO HIS WIFE IS FORTHWITH BRANDED A HEN-PECKED HUSBAND, REGARDLESS OF ANY SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP AND RAPPORT THEY MAY HAVE BUILT UP IN THEIR MARRIAGE. IT IS THE TAUNTS AND SNIGGERS OF A MALE-ORIENTED SOCIETY THAT HAVE CREATED THE MYTH OF THE HEN-PECKED HUSBAND

Hen-pecked — the term, essentially would refer to a man whose individuality has been suppressed, who has no character of his own and whose very being is overshadowed by a strong, dominating wife like Mrs. A. **Definitely not to a man who makes the tea while his wife cleans up the house, or folds the clothes while she makes breakfast, nor to a man who allows decisions in the house to be made rationally rather than by asserting his own (just because he happens to be a man). Hen-pecked cannot refer to a man who respects his wife's opinion and is strong enough to let her opinion be upheld by realising that his is wrong.**

Mr. P. Waris, a successful advertising man, does not think twice about helping his non-working wife in the daily household chores, even after a tiring day's work. After all she also has the right to feel fatigued after working the whole day in the house and at the same time nursing a growing child. As if to prove a point, without any qualms of being labelled as hen-pecked, he wiped a pool of water spilled on the floor. "Marriage," he said, "is a companionship, and after all it is **our** house, not mine or hers. I clean the dishes in our house and what people think about it matters little." So where's the pecking?

According to him a man or a woman begins to dominate because of constantly having to make decisions, because of his or her opinions being perpetually accepted without a challenge, unconditionally. There has to be a two-way traffic. Mr. and Mrs. Waris discuss, and mutually decide upon even important issues like his career.

On the other hand, you have the case of Mr. Ravi (name fictitious) who would not even discuss any decision-making issue regarding his profession with his wife, leave aside allowing her opinion to matter. He asserts this would be the case even if she

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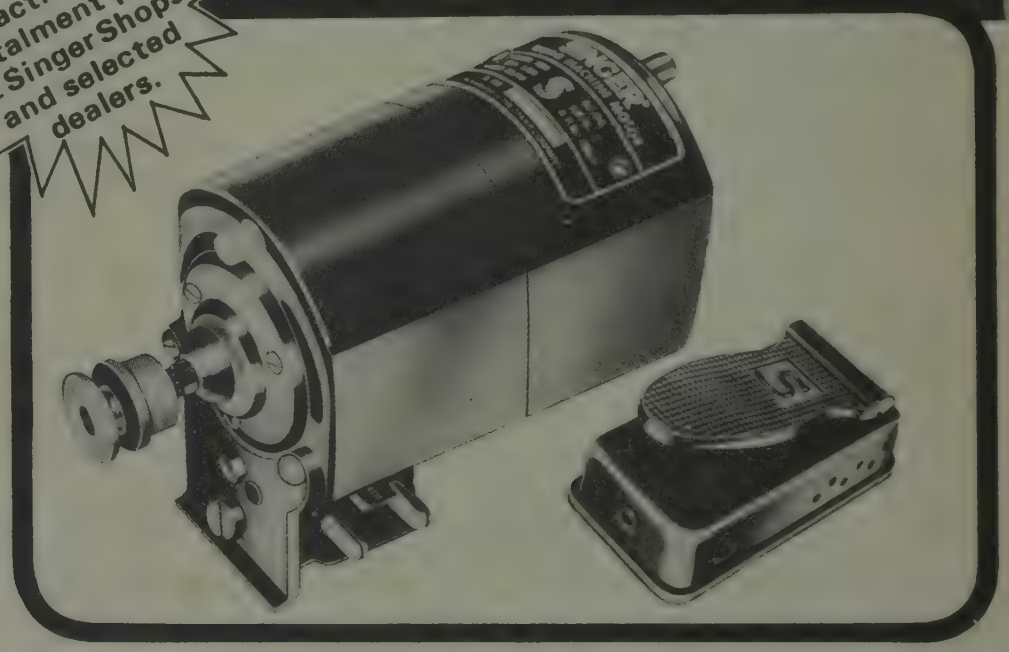

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THE MYTH AND THE REALITY OF THE HEN-PECKED HUSBAND

were intelligent, educated and possessed enough commercial knowledge. He is the man, it's his profession and hence he would appreciate no interference.

Some togetherness!

What leads man to segregate in this manner? What causes him to consider certain fields to be exclusively his? This in spite of women becoming Prime Ministers or being instrumental in toppling governments, in other words, being extremely successful in the man-dominated field of power politics. She is there as a top scientist, a managing director of a firm, and also as a leader of troops in battle.

Some men are of the opinion that it is a woman's feelings of insecurity that allows her to be dominated by man, that causes her to respect and expect her man to be God-like and superior on all counts — a myth propagated and encouraged by books like the Mills and Boon products and our own Hindi films.

Rajiv, a young unmarried man, says, "Women like to be dominated, they like the lion in man. A man who does not assert his authority becomes a victim of the lioness in her. He becomes hen-pecked." Unfortunately, he is right to a certain extent. Many women look out for that he-man-like quality in man. These are those mediocre women who have no interests or identity of their own, and are happy to play the secondary role in a marriage. **They forget that if behind every successful man there is a woman, then behind many a miserable woman there is a man. These are the same women who dismiss a helpful and understanding husband as hen-pecked.**

What, one may ask them, is awkward about a man helping his wife in any sphere of her activity? What is wrong, at the same time, if she takes a 'manly' decision in the house? What brands opinions, decisions, etc., as manly or womanly? There is no point in tracing the historical background or the socio-economic conditions which led man to proclaim himself superior to the woman, when in the present context she has on more than one occasion proved her worth as an equal.

A woman's sense of insecurity sometimes stems from her economic dependence on man. Mrs. Gupta, for instance, cannot make a clean break with her husband, because of the financial stability and comforts he has to offer. The same can be said about some men who have married because of their wife's wealth and hence keep their heads lowered while the wind of woman's dominance blows their hair away. They are truly hen-pecked, but then theirs is no marriage, for the very basis of their marriage is based on warped, mercenary principles. Such cases exist and continue to play a predominant role in our society, a sad commentary of misplaced priorities.

However, not always do economic factors lead to this kind of lopsided relationships. For example, in the case of the working lower classes of urban Maharashtra, it is the women who generally run the house. The men are more often drowned in booze, and under its influence they are known to torture their wives physically. In such cases the women can throw their worthless husbands out — but they don't.

Mr. Vimal dismisses the entire controversy with a single sweeping statement: "Women are so dumb, yaar! A man should be MAN in the house. All this talk of equality for women is only encouraged by weak men. They are hen-pecked, no two ways about it."

Tradition and custom seem to play a major role in such man-woman relationships. Women seem to inherit this sense of man being the ultimate in spite of all his drawbacks, and men seem to be born with this misplaced sense of superiority. Many quote the sagacious Manu or the Koran at length to support their hollow claims.

Women have been pecked for centuries and no one has coined a phrase for them. If a man begins sharing in what she does or allows her to share in what he does, he becomes hen-pecked. What is marriage then? Is it not a coming together of two bodies physically and mentally? Is it not the sharing of two experiences, two emotions? Does it not mean respecting each other for what he or she is? If it is not all this and more, then it is not a marriage but a buying of a slave for a social status. A purchase clothed in the garb of respectability by signing on the dotted line on some piece of white paper in black ink.

THE NEED FOR MEN'S LIBERATION

Continued from page 13

true. In days gone by, he was probably judged by his prowess as a hunter, a rider, a marksman, a trader, even a scholar. In today's India he is judged by his ability to become an engineer, a chartered accountant, a smart young fellow with a degree in management — or just his ability to make it into the white-collar class.

This is where the knife begins to cut both ways. The son must not be an under-achiever; he must get the required marks and grades; he must outpace other people's sons in the competition for jobs and positions. The under achieving daughter gets gentler treatment; professional independence was probably not expected of her anyway. But suddenly the son is thrown into the outside world — and expected to cope with it, when he was trained from birth to expect everybody to cope with him. All too soon, the responsibilities of being a family man will also be placed on

his bewildered shoulders. In most cases, he will then proceed to let the pattern repeat itself. Similarly conditioned to her role, so will the young wife. If she rebels, he will probably feel Fate has been very unkind to him. And so it will have been — but in ways that he can hardly be expected to understand at that late stage.

How can the pattern be broken, and both men and women freed from the straitjackets in which they are bound? Can education do it? A recent study of school books reveals that the stereotypes are perpetuated in school texts. Boys are depicted as 'doers' while girls are hardly mentioned at all except as someone's sister. When portrayed, girls appear in supportive, semi-domestic roles. Men are shown as leaders, professionals, heroes. Women are shown as someone's mother or wife — or at most as the helpless heroine of a tale in which the hero has to perform impressive feats of strength and bravery. Teachers take these stereotypes a step further by assigning activities and duties to girl and boy pupils on much the same lines as they would be assigned at home. So the solutions do not lie in today's schools.

Where do they lie? As usual, in the minds of men — and women. Until they germinate there, men will also continue to be something less than first class citizens. It is not a cheering prospect.

All attention on boy babies — the girls do not count!

HUM SAB HERO HAIN!

SUPERMAN LIVES! — IN THE GARB OF THE INDIAN MALE INHABITING THE WORLDS OF ADVERTISING AND CINEMA.
THE MEDIA MAY BE SELLING DREAMS, BUT THEY ARE ALSO SELLING THE INDIAN MALE SHORT IN THE LONG RUN!

Darius Cooper

God is supposed to have created man in his image. Since man could not reciprocate by creating God in his image, he decided to extend his own image and redefine it for his fellowman. In ancient times in India the media consisted of Epics, the Puranas and mythology. Gods were the image of man created by this media. We have now come a long way, and in the 70's we find ourselves as the 'bhakts' of media — in which cinema and advertising have a very major role to play.

The 'tabut' of Indian cinema rests squarely on its HEROES. Just as the commercial Japanese samurai Kung-fu his way with a touch of Zen through his

The Indian film hero, as typified by Amitabh — the angry young man who talks with his fists.

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A Guide to the Well-Dressed Male

The 'hero' image is perpetuated in advertisements (mainly textiles and cosmetics). The strong shoulder, the wilting, adoring female continue the story...

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BINNY
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What prompts this heroic impulse in the Indian filmi Supermale is not only a sense of justice and fair-play. The common Indian man, who is his realistic counterpart, is an individual who lives a trapped existence. This man who looks up to him from the theatre's ambient darkness is the slave of a humdrum life. Besides his routinized hell, he is a man compulsorily tied down by the dharma of obligations. He has a duty to his government, to his 'gaon', to his family, to his priest, to his superiors — even to his moneylenders! Such a man feels not only the complete denial of freedom, but also an anti-authoritarian rage deep within him. And it is here that the Indian filmi Supermale steps in to give him his vicarious satisfaction, a la Freud.

The film hero with his peculiar charisma sends waves of excitement through the audiences. Vinod Khanna is a case in point.

Brawn and virility go together to make Dharmendra the filmi Superman adored and emulated by the common man.

Photographs : Girish Shukla

The "macho-man" dresses flamboyantly, makes known his playboy intentions with his all-conquering look!

rivals, the Indian Male Filmi Hero redefines the classic Kshatriya image in the adoring eyes of his audience worshipping his every movement. True, the Indian film hero is larger than life. But this hard, stoic, isolated individual is not pure 'macho'. His macho tendencies are mingled with strong 'moral' convictions. Like a Kshatriya, all his macho actions stem from a predominantly crystallized moral core. He has a dharma or duty to perform : he is a son obeying his mother's dying wish to punish his father's assassin or a brother avenging his sister's rape and suicide; or a son avenging his father's callous removal from a job by a corrupt boss.

The Hero becomes the Loner fighting this Cruel Society. The fantasy of that free life is provided by this Superman in variously defined roles : as the poverty-stricken hero tearing up a bribe-cheque of one lakh rupees offered by his beloved's proud and rich father; giving a piece of his mind with his resignation letter to his superior; walking off the marriage pandal before the scandalized guests and

Maaza has the taste of rich living— the kind you re used to in the great capitals of he world. In strawberry, pineapple nd orange flavours. Add to hilled water and stir. And presto! ou have a delicious drink. Gives extra flavour to lassis, souffles, ocktails, etc.

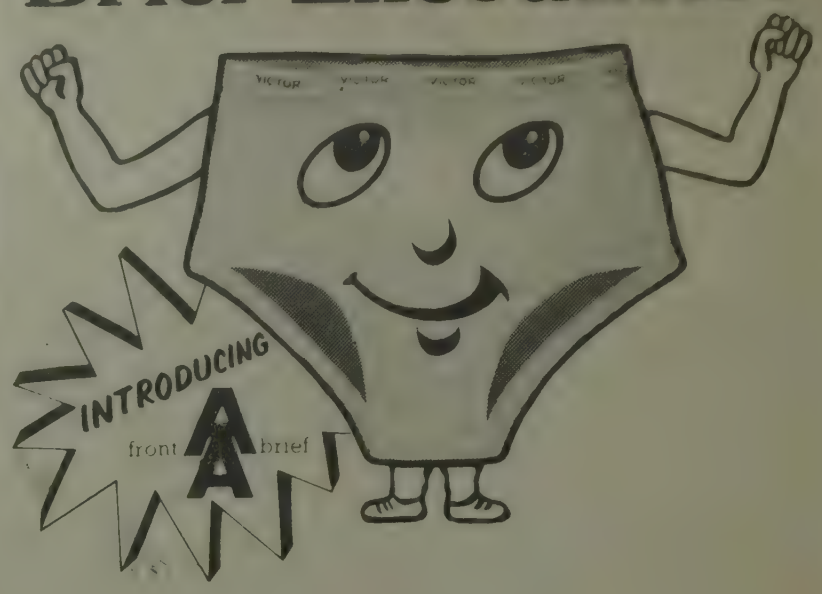
Maaza is so good that every time you serve Maaza it looks like a special occasion. Your children and guests will love its juicy taste. Maaza contains health-ving Vitamins A, C & D and Calcium. One glass of Maaza supplies more than 75% of an adult's daily Vitamin C requirement. Keep a bottle of Maaza in your home today.

MAAZA —*for you and your guests who are used to the good things of life*

REE! Write for the Maaza Recipe Book which tells you all about many delicacies you can prepare with Maaza, to Parle Beverages Pvt. d., MID Department, Western Express Highway, Chakala, Andheri (E), nbay 400 093

RADEUS/PB/M-1

Brief Encounter!



I am DOUBLE A and I am new.

Q. There are briefs and briefs and briefs, so What's new about you?

A. I've been created by people who've been in the business for years.

Q. What else?

A. A Specially designed for superb fitting and comfort. And with a new, light, long-life elastic waistband.

Q. And.....?

A. In a range of attractive colours.

Q. What else?

A. Made from soft, smooth, featherlight Egyptian cotton— gives a great smooth look under clothes.

Q. Oh, Yes?

A. Extra lining for comfort, Wrinkle--free.

Q. Anything else?

A. And all this well within your budget. Your best buy in the market.

❋ Sounds good. Sounds comforting.
❋ Where's the nearest shop.....?!

A winner in a man's world.

LARGEST SELLING BRAND IN INDIA

Victor®
FRONT BRIEFS
A.V & U

V/TULIKA/3/79

shrewish relatives. The Indian filmi Supermale must always emerge as a winner. If he can't achieve his win positively, he achieves it negatively through a spectacular sacrifice. That is why it is Amitabh Bachchan who dies in **Sholay** and not Dharmendra. The latter's romantic future, which will give his wayward life the much longed for stability it needs, requires the sacrifice of his macho friend.

There is with the hero a sort of charisma that provides not only a shock of recognition but an acceptance that comes through the excitement he generates. The '50's and '60's Indian audiences of Hollywood films tingled with pleasure when John Wayne slowly walked down the empty street to meet the gunmen waiting for him in the shadows of a fatal sunset. The sulky splendour of James Dean on screen, exploded the suppressed anger against parents, teachers, bullying officials, and "that breed" against which rebels had definite causes. Marlon Brando did the same by fighting against the nastiness and pettiness of ordered social institutions. Monty Cliff's brooding stoicism and stubborn gallantry towards his convictions resusciated all banished hopes and dreams. In recent times the younger kids felt all these symptoms once again when John Travolta took that casually defiant walk through the opening credits of **Saturday Night Fever.**

Advertising, on the other hand, which utilizes all techniques of persuasion, and appeals to the basic psychology of the consumer, has further helped to perpetuate this hero-image in modern times, which is one of the virile, dynamic and successful man. This image is nowhere so strongly projected as in textile advertising — perhaps because it is the dress which reflects the man's image of himself.

There is the macho-ad man who dresses differently, flamboyantly, because his playboy intentions are made very clear through his style-conscious apparel. If he walks into a room, he conquers. What gives him this 'force' is his Dinesh suitings or his Charag Din shirts or his Travolta casuals. If purists were to complain here that such ads pressurize hitherto held moralistic attitudes, one must remind them that these ads stop short at appearance. The "LION in the man" does not change his moralistic structure. Edward

Weiss gives a very interesting example of how insurance policies are a clear indication of subtly pressurizing the male on the grounds of immortality. The insurance policy ads are very successful because they are aimed at "the respondent's fierce desire to achieve immortality in order to **control** his family after death." In a male-dominated society like ours this kind of appeal strikes appropriate responsive chords.

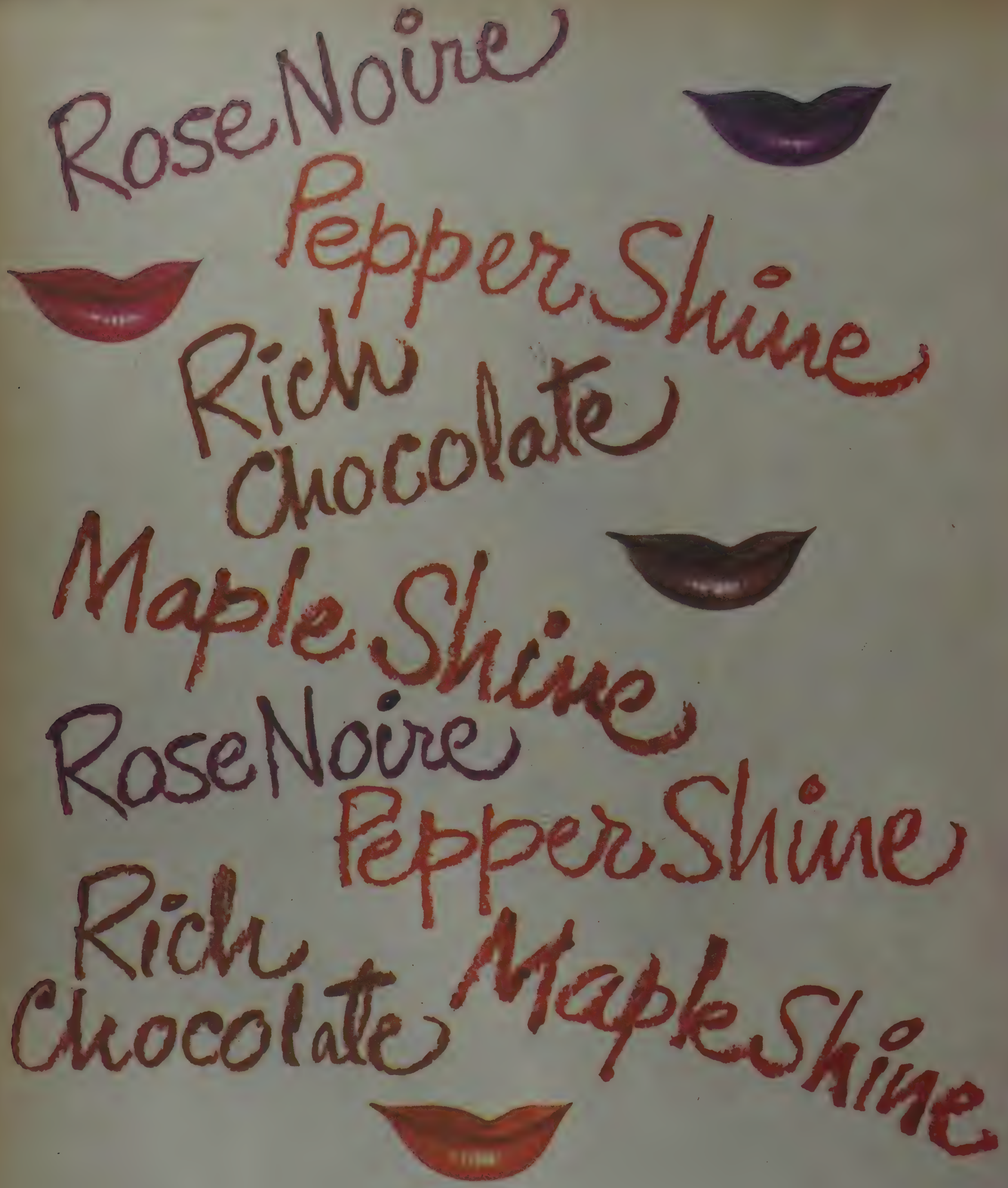
Business first.
Pleasure afterwards.
Lakmé Lather Shaving Cream
For the man who regards his shave as a serious ritual. Briskly whip up a rich, luxuriant lather. Then plow the razor through, smoothly and efficiently. And another day's stubble is vanquished.
Lakmé After Shave Lotion
Pleasure hits you with an ecstatic tingle. Leaving a fragrance unmistakably, authoritatively male. A richly deserved reward for a job well done.
From Lakmé. The businesslike Shaving Cream. And the After Shave Lotion that's sheer pleasure. They go together.
Lakmé for men
Lakmé
deCunha/L/MR1

The cruel, "manly" streak! Feroze Khan wields the whip to show he's lord and master.

ABOVE:
The "hidden persuaders" of mass media — a neatly-packaged deal that sells dreams.

Another male-image is the swinging blue-jeans type which is aimed at the emerging college culture. What is emphasized here is the casualness and the freedom attained from the mannered crease and the Windsor tie-knot. The comfort and the suitability of the apparel makes the wearer completely at home — in a five-star hotel, on the mobike, or in an Udipi restaurant. The dragon of Kung-fu, immortalized by the legend of the late Bruce Lee, has become a skilfully media-controlled energy directed at a tired Horlicked generation, instantly brought back to a Bourne vitality with a fistful Boost in energy level as well as in sales. Continuing this trend, the popularity of famous sportsmen has made them viable medium themselves for consumer product advertising. If you were a Kanga League cricketer you would use Brylcream before you went out to bat and 'Engineered' fifty runs in ten minutes.

Today the Indian male's soul comes packaged, increasingly. It's up to you to unwrap the plastic and taste the goodies inside. These are the Kshatriyas of India whom you can't outcaste so easily. They are the infiltrating touchables. And in a male-dominated society the "hidden persuaders" of mass media are playing their roles successfully in the selling of their myths, their symbols and their dreams.



LIPS BY MAX FACTOR

Free Lip Brush when you buy 2 lipsticks. Offer open until stocks last

MARRIAGE IS THE MOST COMPLICATED OF ALL HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS. MEN LOOK UPON THE TRIP TO THE ALTAR AS AKIN TO SHEEP BEING LED TO SLAUGHTER. AND YET, MOST MALES DO MARRY. WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO MAKE THEM "HAPPILY MARRIED MEN"?

A. Virendra Luther

THE ULTIMATE CALAMITY!

"John Donne, Anne Donne, Undone", aphorised a percipient wit when the writing of that gifted poet suddenly began to decline in merit after his marriage to Anne. "Advice to Young Men Contemplating Marriage — DON'T", runs the text of an apocryphal ad. And so on. If things said in jest do indeed reflect subliminal and hidden attitudes, it is apparent that men regard marriage as the ultimate calamity that could befall them.

The image of a macho or a playboy has for long been nurtured assiduously on the premise that while philandering and wenching are positive attributes of man. marriage is an act of sissyness. The domestication, which is a consequence of marriage, is considered a humbling of the much vaunted "lion in you". A bachelor is always referred to as gay (in the good old unliberated sense of the word), and the prospect of his motion towards the altar conjures a vision of a gull being (mis) led to slaughter. Commisseration on his joining the martyrs' club is voiced soulfully by his married male friends. In short, marriage becomes a re-enactment of the downfall of man.

And yet, most men do marry, be they a Dara Singh or a Mohammad Ali or even an Idi Amin!

It is an elementary truth that as many men enter the bonds of wedded life as women — or almost, if one is finicky enough to reckon polygyny. The number of men seeking brides in the matrimonial columns of newspapers equals, if it does not exceed, the number of maidens seeking grooms.

Surely, there must be some primordial urge which overpowers a man's better judgments. his conscious, cultivated arguments against losing his independence and swagger. Is it that men's attitudes to marriage are essentially ambivalent, one for preaching and the other for practising? Or is it the Biblical missing-rib syndrome? This appears to be more likely, for every man comes to a stage of growth when he begins to long for companionship which would fulfil a certain void in his life, meet a certain want. It is essential here to stress that this need is is not to be confused with the need to have an outlet for the sex urge; for that, very few men need to marry, particularly in the liberal, almost licentious, milieu of today. It is something more subtle, more wide-ranging.

Ramesh Jagtiani, a young executive who is yet to marry but who seems quite clear about why he eventually will, calls it a need "to lead a steady, settled life, to have a companion to share joys and sorrows, to have a home of one's own — and to beget children."

Suhel, a young man of 20 who is training to be a forest ranger, looks forward to marriage because it will enable him to have a mate with whom he could "share my joys, my sorrows, my elation, and my depression, my glory and the boredom of my somewhat sequestered life of a forester."

For **Sakharam,** a farm worker, marriage will provide a comrade-in-arms who will, apart from fetching additional income, "tend me when I am sick, feed me when I am hale and hearty and bear me a son". A somewhat similar view is implied in the wise generalization made by **Bashir Sheikh,** a pop singer, leader of a rock group and a full-time marketing executive, married for ten years, father of two imps. "Different minds have different concepts of marriage," he says "To most men marriage simply means a long-term contract. They assume that the wife is someone in place of a regular servant, with one exception: she is married to them!"

Whatever it be, it is clear that most men marry to seek some kind of fulfilment, to satisfy some kind of need, and the highest kind of need, I would say, is the need to love, which is more an act of giving than taking. To love someone exclusively, to bestow on her the greatest treasure that the human psyche is capable of possessing, the treasure of fondness, warmth, sentiment and emotion, to create a relationship wherein innermost thoughts are communicated unspokenly. But of course that is idealistic balderdash.

In the words of Thomas A. Harris, the father of Transactional Analysis, "Marriage is the most complicated of all human relationships. Few alliances can produce such extremes of emotion or can so quickly travel from professions of the utmost bliss to that cold, terminal legal write-off — mental cruelty."

So how does a man seek to insure against this built-in risk factor?' By exercising judiciousness in choosing his mate, for one. Every man has a picture of the ideal wife clearly etched in his imagination. It starts with looks. "She has to be visually attractive, for that is the quality that is going to attract me to begin with," explains Suhel.

Most matrimonial ads echo this view, and it has the stamp of corroboration by the redoubtable Nirad C. Chaudhuri who affirms that "the truth of the matter is that love is primarily visual. though in persons without sight it may be tactile. Without seeing there is no loving, and no man can love a woman if the geometrical properties of her body do not tally with his geometrical predispositions, which will control his aesthetic and amorous inclinations. All men are born with predetermined likes and dislikes in respect of form, and in the case of the femininie form the likes and dislikes are, of course, concerned with curves, not straight lines."

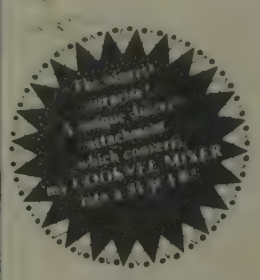
If you have a mixer, you'd wish you had the features

that only SUPER Cookvel Mixer offers...

advanced technology

Check for yourself!

FEATURES	OTHER MIXTURES		SUPER COOKVEL MIXER
	BRAND A	BRAND B	
CAPACITY –Liquidiser –Dry Grinding –Wet Grinding	1 Litre 200 gms 200 gms	1 Litre 250 gms 250 gms	1·6 Litres 250 gms 300 gms
CONTAINER	Plastic only	Stainless steel only	Choice of three: Glass/Stainless steel/ Anodised Aluminium
BODY	Plastic	Plastic	Heavy duty Aluminium for stability. Shockproof, scratchproof and also for the first time in India plastic coated body
OPERATIONAL	3 speeds	3 speeds	3 speeds
CONTINUOUS RUNNING	30 Minutes	30 Minutes	45 Minutes
ADDITIONAL ACCESSORIES	None	Metal bowl with 'see through' cap	Fix-on-to-Mixer type Masala Jar. Use different Masala Jar for each Masala After grinding remove, put on the lid and keep aside. No need to clean the Masala Jar. Lends uniformity to Kitchen Shelf Additional Masala Jars with lids for just Rs * each



Elegent

Sturdy

Econo-mical

Time Saver

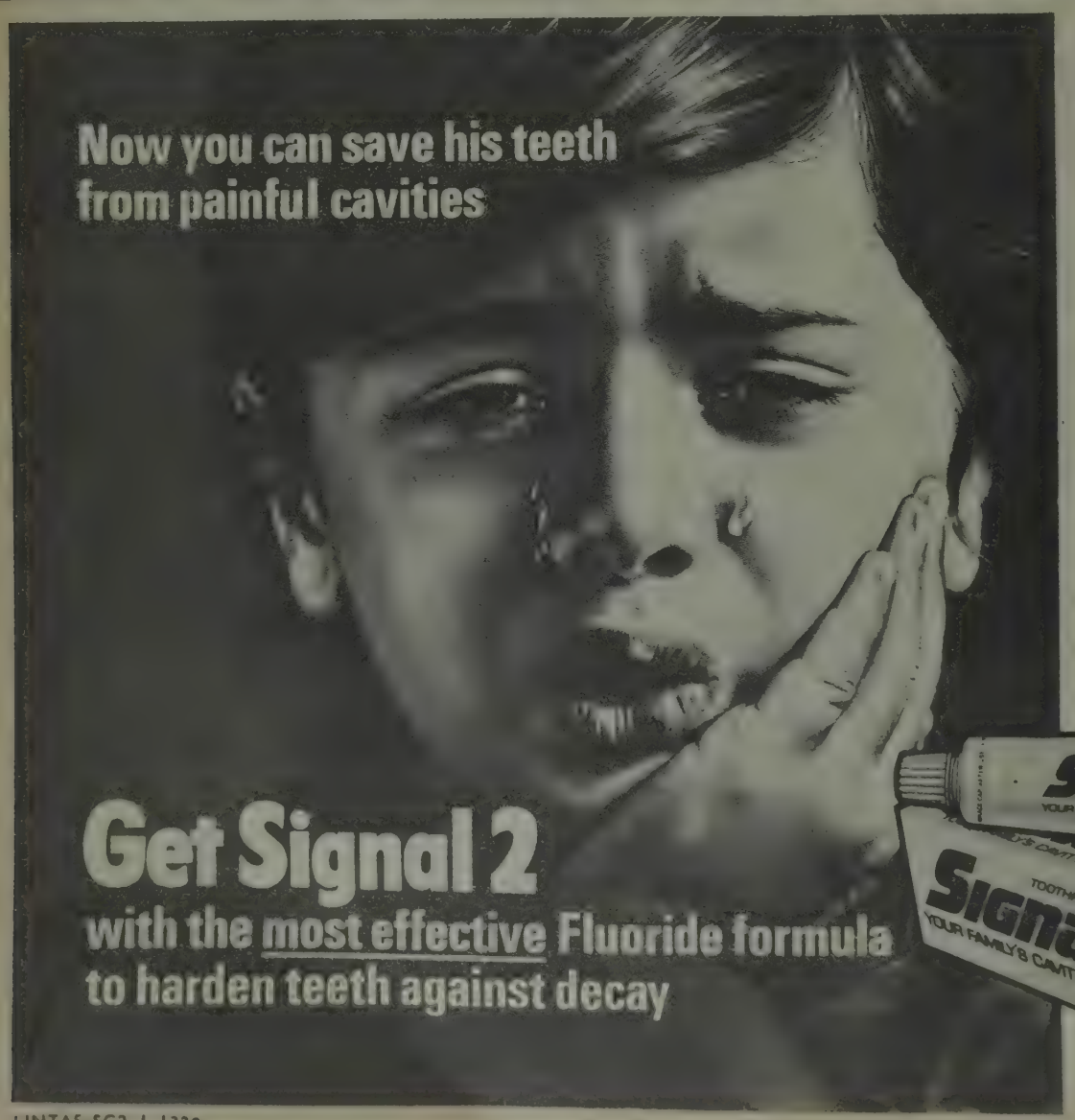
Unique Juicer! To use, replace the container with the juicer. Juicer attachment instantly converts the Mixer into a Juicer! And you get the Juice pouring right into the glasses!

NOBLE ELECTRIC COMPANY,
23 Kala Udyog Premises,
Bhandup, Bombay-400 078
Phone: 591746

SUPER Cookvel Mixer-cum-Grinder...

from the people who gave you the Trusted Cookvel Pressure Cooker!

AFCO/RPC-79

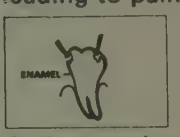


Now you can save his teeth from painful cavities

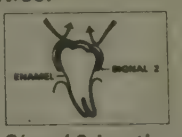
Get Signal 2

with the most effective Fluoride formula to harden teeth against decay

A toothache isn't just painful, it's a sign of tooth decay. Ignore it, and the decay goes deeper, leading to painful cavities.



Ordinary toothpastes can't stop mouth acids from penetrating teeth and causing decay.



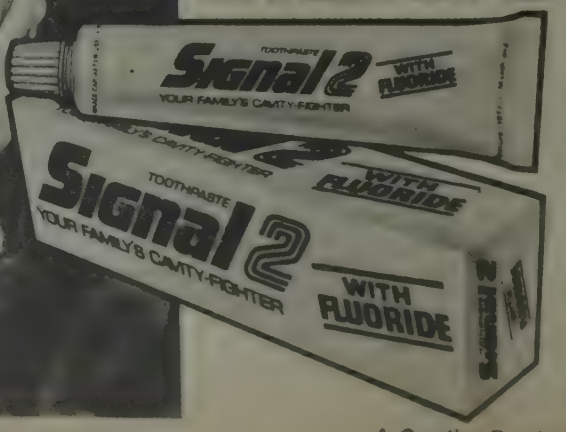
Signal 2 has the most effective fluoride formula to stop mouth acids from penetrating teeth and causing decay.

The cavity-fighter

Now, before it's too late, start your family on the toothpaste that is proven to fight tooth decay—Signal 2. Its special fluoride formula unites with the teeth to make them harder, more resistant to harmful mouth acids—and helps prevent cavities. No other toothpaste is better at fighting tooth decay.

Don't just take our word. Check with your dentist.

Signal 2 WITH FLUORIDE



your family's cavity—fighter

LINTAS-SG2. I-1320

A Quality Product by HINDUSTAN LEVER

THE ULTIMATE CALAMITY!

This yardstick of overt beauty is, however, cast aside when men fall in love. Then, such consideration, or indeed considerations of any rationally perceptible attributes. become irrelevancies. What reigns supreme is a deeper empathy, an overweening fascination with qualities of head and heart, intimations of compatibility or certain 'vibes', to put it trendily. And this is surely a firmer base for the edifice of marriage. As a matter of fact, the fundamental flaw in the system of arranged marriages is precisely its reliance on superficial appeal.

Though there are men who enter into marriages of convenience to realize get-rich-quick aspirations or to please their bosses or to satisfy the vanity of their parents, those who have any sense and a measure of maturity will attach more importance to qualities which would bring them deeper satisfaction, and contribute to what Bashir Sheikh calls "harmony and respect". Even Suhel would not be content with a dumb beauty. He would like her to be cultivated, articulate, companionable. Competence in the kitchen, affable nature, a concern for the socially depressed, an alert mind and keen wit, enlightened approach to sex, mature evaluation of the role of money in one's life and happiness, ability to bring up the children intelligently, a touch of piety and humility, a love for, if not proficiency in, the arts, good relations with the mother-in-law — these are some of the abiding qualities that various men look for in their wives. Negatively, most men agree that their wives should not be mean, slovenly, suspicious jealous, moody, spendthrift, nagging, fat, smelly, drunkards (though they should join the husbands in an occasional drink), flirtatious, loud (vocally and in tastes), vain, conceited, shrewish, dumb, puritanical, faddist, etc., etc.

Although, at the intellectual level, men appreciate the need for give-and-take to make a success of marriage, many are still unable to discard the lord-and-master approach. The husband is after all the provider, the breadwinner. The name on the door is his, the telephone is listed in his name, the car too is owned by him, the surname attached to the wife and the children is his. In short, he is surrounded by reminders that it is his world. Naturally, therefore, strident claims of senseless equality strike him as inane and illogical. Movements like the women's lib arouse hostility in him. How can a man and a woman be measured by the same yardstick? Does she not hold supremacy in the kitchen

or in other womanly chores? Biological construction sets different roles for men and women, so where is the hassle? The musculature, the anatomy, even the size and weight of brain are different for men and women! Each has his or her own talent, own powers, so why not put them to the use for which the evolutionary process has adapted them? To say this is not to advocate incarceration of wives in the homes. They must have the freedom to move unmolested wherever they like to; they must have the right to develop skills and abilities with which nature has endowed them; but for God's sake, let us not generate confrontation out of a non-issue and push men and their wives into postures of belligerence. Instead, let us exhort everyone, with feeling, to Make Love, Not War.

The break-up of joint families, the strains of facing the tribulations of life in cold-blooded cities, the economic pressures which drive more and more women to take up jobs, albeit willy-nilly, are some virulent factors which men are increasingly being called upon to cope with today. Given the means, few men would like their wives to be exposed to the frustrations and pressures that go with a job. The indignities, the sheer physical strain, the onslaught of lecherous advances by male colleagues and bosses — these inevitably kill the femininity that a man cherishes in his wife. Few men are not galled to know that their wives are subject to reprimands and harsh treatment by other men in the course of their employment. Wives, they feel, should appreciate the solicitude and protectiveness of their husbands. It only shows that they care.

In addition to problems of ego and sentiment, working by wives causes other stresses on the edifice of marriage. "Husbands of working wives tend to be more jealous," says Bashir. "If the wife begins neglecting her husband, he gets suspicious, though the real reason may simply be fatigue, what with the problem of travelling in large cities. When both husband and wife work, children are neglected, and their studies suffer." Ramesh Jagtiani also highlights the problems. According to him, working partners have to try much harder to maintain harmony and in the process have to compromise on many issues.

For men like **Binny** and **Preet Inder Singh,** both young engineers working in Faridabad, the former on the brink of marriage, the latter married a year ago, wives are for the house alone, and it is for them, the men, to face the world for a living.

It is not only the men who subscribe to this wives-should-not-work view. A surprisingly large majority of women feel likewise. Geeta, engaged to Mahendra Shah, a sales executive, was quick in dismissing all this talk of women's lib and working wives. "I am a conventional girl," she asserted, forgetting her mod attire and the fact that she was unknowingly defying orthodox convention by attending a party with her fiancee, "and in those matters most of the girls in my college are like me."

The issue of equal rights becomes still more prickly when it comes to infidelity and adultery, to put it bluntly. Can men countenance the same kind of licence being exercised by their wives as they claim the right to exercise themselves? The answer is a resounding no, uttered in a properly scandalized tone. And this should not surprise anyone, except the utterly extreme libbers.

But even these crazed wives will be surprised, and may be disappointed, to know that, contrary to popularly held belief, only a small percentage of men do actually practise promiscuity or have extra-marital affairs. It is a part of the Casanova myth which men do not like to demolish. Conquests and affairs exist more in men's fantasies than in their real lives. The wives, however, are sure that "all men are alike", and, therefore, half their lives are spent in mistrusting and suspecting their husbands' morals. And if more and more husbands have started thinking aloud "why not", it is because of the feeling that they are anyway held accused of misconduct, so "what the heck, let's see what it is like!" If wives cultivated faith in their husbands and confidence in their own charm. if they consciously worked to enhance their attractiveness for them, if they became less inhibited and more innovative, they need have no fears about their husbands' straying. Of course, it is not denied that there are many husbands who are unfaithful, but let it not be forgotten that more often than not, the 'other woman' is also a wife, somebody's.

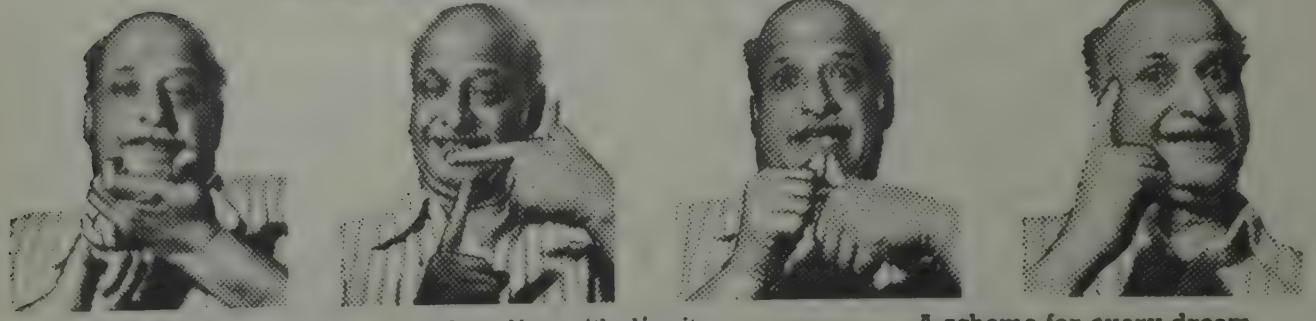
Successful and happy marriages are mirages. Two individuals forced to share their lives "till death do us part" are, sooner or later, bound to feel oppressed by the boredom of monotony. Arguments are apt to flare up for petty reasons. Disillusionment will change the picture after the short-lived euphoria has worn off. Men will begin to chafe before long at the shackles which marriage has clamped on them. Wives will go berserk once in a while. Divorces will continue to rise. In short, imperfections of the institution of marriage will continue to be highlighted by breakdowns.

To escape disaster, the mates have to be on their toes all the time. As Margaret Mead said, "Perfection in compatibility is illusory." A workable compromise between self-centredness and concern for the other has to be striven for consciously. Rather than give-and-take, each partner should try to give, and leave the other to decide how much the giver should take. Hang-ups of childhood have to be overcome and faith and trust need to be nourished with deliberation and zeal. Men must treat the wives with fondness and warmth, and women must accept the fact that in this relationship of equality, men are a little more equal. There is much to be said in favour of the good old **Bharatiya Nari** code of conduct in which husbands are **"devtas".**

M.C.P., me? Far from it, I am merely underlining the soundness of the system which has stood the test of time in India, and of the sensibleness of which even western cultures are becoming more appreciative.

Before I conclude, let me share a nagging question. After all, what percentage of men are we talking about? Do such niceties as have been probed above hold any meaning for the millions of men in India who people our villages and toil in our fields and factories and who are also husbands? For them, a wife is a wife is wife — and cheers to that profundity!

The deaf and dumb talk about us.



To be physically handicapped is a sad fate, but to be poor as well is hell.

It is a life without hope. For the blind, the deaf, the dumb, the crippled, the ones without limbs. All those for whom till now a bank was a stranger.

What we are doing

Every day some of these helpless receive financial aid from us. To learn a suitable trade, educate themselves at special institutions, become self reliant...to draw them into the mainstream of society and help them live with dignity.

Innovative banking

A special cell of the State Bank initiates these unique schemes for the downtrodden.

The Bank also goes to slums. Schools. Hospitals. Prisons. Calamity stricken areas. No area is untouchable...

Farms and farmers

It is the only bank with agricultural development branches. Special branches to finance day to day farming needs and novel agricultural schemes.

A scheme for every dream

For your son's education abroad. An easy retirement. Your own house. A kitchen garden. A shining new taxicab. A tidy business with tidy money

The largest banking complex in the world

A complex of nearly 5000 offices, the State Bank finances national development projects on a grand scale. And plays a major role in representing India on the international banking scene.

We're growing. Not only in size, but also in involvement.

State Bank
Let's come closer

SB:3956

I never seem to manage my hair if I use oil

Jabakusum

Don't be silly

You really can't take good care of your hair without oil.

As for me, every night before going to bed, I apply Jabakusum on my hair, comb gently and tie it.

That keeps my hair healthy, beautiful and manageable. I have no difficulty in styling my hair as I please.

C. K. SEN & CO. PRIVATE LTD.,
Jabakusum House,
Calcutta; New Delhi

GREAT EXPECTATIONS

Is there an "ideal man" or an "ideal woman"? What exactly do men and women expect from each other? Our interviewer DOLLY THAKORE conducted a sample survey—and here are the findings . . .

In America, the land of the free, men are asking "When are you going to take me home and rape me!"

The industrial worker in Texas, gets his kicks every evening in the local beer parlour — riding an electronic bull. This mechanical monster invariably throws its urban 'cowboy' off its back, but has been tamed by the 'cowgirl' who visits the parlour. This has nothing to do with female wiles, but only demonstrates that Texan women are tougher and more tenacious than their men. Of course, this has given their boyfriends a certain inferiority complex. That's why you wouldn't be surprised to hear a cowboy whispering to his cowgirl "When are you going to take me home and rape me?"

Meanwhile, in the Bastar region of Madhya Pradesh, the young tribal men and women 'get to know each other' in Ghotuls or community dormitories, where pre-marital sex is the rule rather than the exception. But it's the traditional 'boy asks girl' again.

It is difficult to assimilate and analyse the different attitudes, demands and expectations that the Indian male or female has from the opposite sex. And those that I interviewed voiced the dichotomy that exists in the standards and expectations of the traditionals and the progressives, the haves and the have-nots.

Denaz Tata said very vehemently, "The average Indian male leaves a lot to be desired. He still thinks that a woman is a plaything. He won't marry the woman he dates, and if he discovers that she is not a virgin, then off goes the relationship... Needless to say, these values don't apply to him. And that's what needs to be changed."

"This is not true," says demure **Mrs. Kartar Singh.**

"What was the most important thing you wanted from your man when you were young?" I asked. "Good looks," came the quick reply. "You see, I belong to a West Punjab family, where people are really handsome, tall and fair. My father and brothers are very handsome. But later I realized there are other more important qualities — like a person who can adjust, and who has more grey matter. In fact, my husband used to tease me about it. But even at that time, I wish I had had the opportunity to select or get to know the man I was about to marry.

"I've been luckier than most, but he is too rigid. I'd like that to change."

Asked about how honest was her relationship with her husband, Mrs. Singh says, "He has shown me pictures of his girlfriends, and the poems that he wrote to them," giggling shyly. "I have told him about my life also, but not to that extent."

Denaz Tata maintains that lack of sex education held her back from being very natural towards boys. "I agree a woman should be attractive, a good housewife, and a good mother. I've always looked for understanding, fidelity and affection in a man, and I don't think those expectations have changed since I was a teenager. I'd like a man to open car doors, always pay the bill. And I'd like my husband to do these things."

Padmini Ganpathy favours a happy-go-lucky, fun-loving, outgoing man. "I'm quite possessive. I'm a Gemini, so I ought to be," says this 18-year-old Bharata Natyam dance-turned-interior decorator and Modern Dancer. "To a certain extent I'd like a possessive man. But adjusting," she adds quickly.

"Sexual fidelity," she says, "is a must in a marriage. Actually, as long as it doesn't cause too much of a hindrance or lessen his feelings for me it's OK. But I would like him to pay more attention to me. I certainly don't believe in barriers of any kind — caste, religion, etc." She ponders a moment. "Indian males," she adds, "are too possessive. They should have a broader outlook to life. They stick to their own line of occupation. They never give women an opportunity to do something."

Kiyoko Motoshiromizu runs a beauty parlour in Bombay. She came to India in 1968 — having married an Indian businessman in Kobe, Japan. "I certainly don't want a gambler, or someone who is unsteady in earning and a job," said Kiyoko. "He must be affectionate and not depend too much on women for support." Kiyoko was brought up in Kyushu where, she said,

"We were brought up to do everything for the man."

Sanjeevini Dutta was holidaying in India, with her four-month-old baby when I met her. A social worker, she said, "Before marriage I looked for a certain intellectual affinity...

DENAZ TATA

Mrs. KARTAR SINGH

PADMINI GANPATHY

KIYOKO MOTOSHIROMIZU

SANJEEVINI DUTTA

RASNA BEHL

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GREAT EXPECTATIONS

I remember looking at the kind of books he read, and mentally ticking them off as O.K. In my immature way I thought that that was most important. I was lucky that he turned out to be kind and considerate. I hate vanity and ego and chauvinism. I like an easy-going, adaptable quality. Not an aggressive person, but whose strength is in his quiet ways. I can't stand frivolity, and of course somebody to whom 9 to 5 is not the main focus of life. After all, work and office politics would be the main preoccupations."

In any family, the husband and wife relationship is most important. But in most Indian homes, once the children come, the focus of attention shifts to them. "This needs to be changed. Children certainly add a new dimension to a relationship, but, I think, we must be friends and lovers first, husband and father second. To me this is very important." Sanjeevini feels that the experience of bringing up a child should be shared and enjoyed by both the father and the mother.

ADRIAN TATA

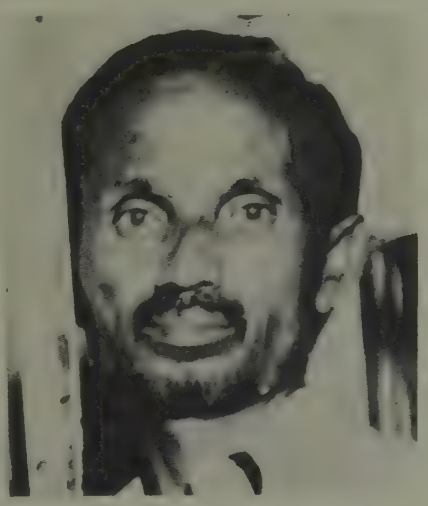
"I didn't start married life with any preconceived ideas or expectations. I learnt through guidance." And this came from **Rasna Behl,** a modern 25-year-old model-cum--mother-cum fashionable working woman. "I would worry if Randhir took objection to anything I did — whether it was modelling or wearing clothes that I want. . . I like a harmonious life," Rasna confessed, "whether it's with husband or parents. And I've been lucky to get someone who is not that bad. He is amiable sometimes," she said, giving him a side glance. "I can make direct comparisons with the last guy I almost married. He was so dictatorial, and a complete male chauvinist. The 'I' was all important. He had three aims in life: to have a son, write a book, and die famous. I was very young then — full of love and romance. Wife and others didn't matter in his life. My expectations have evolved.

"Most Indian men are prudes. There is a lot I'd like to discuss about life — our thoughts, our reactions, our responses. But I'd hate to be the one to make the first move. because I'd hate to be rejected."

Mrs. Kartar Singh recommends that men should help in the house work as "change of routine is a relaxation in itself". But she admits her husband didn't help her at all till he retired.

Padmini "would like him to cook for me when I'm lazy, clean

DILIP THAKORE



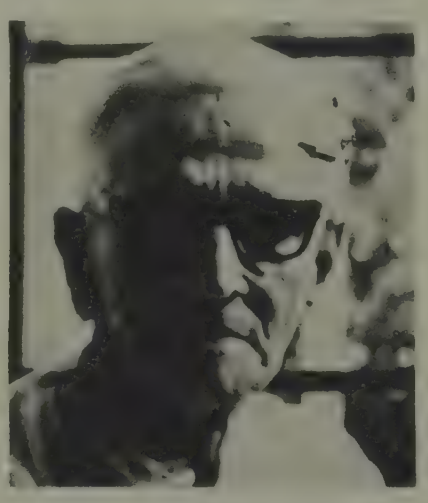
BHAGOJI GOPAL CHAUHAN

house on alternate weeks. He should be interested in gardening and designing houses."

And now what about our men?

Twenty nine-year-old **Adrian Tata** doesn't expect anything at all. "They can perform as they wish," says this London-returned young man. "Women are the same as men — beings on earth that one has to get along with. There are some superficial differences, otherwise they are in the same position as men. Most of the other cats are married or have girlfriends. My views are very non-representative. I find it quite strange that most men have a need for a woman. This husband and wife relationship would interfere with independence and flexibility. I don't think I am capable of having a steady relationship."

After five years in London, Adrian feels, "Women are quite capable creatures in their own realms. Women's lib is good." Asked about Indian women, Adrian said, "They are on par with the foreign women, especially those from Delhi and Bombay — forget about the villages. Indian women are travelling abroad, picking up ideas from abroad, and improving themselves."



P. S. RAMAKRISHNA

Not all men are as undemanding as Adrian.

Dilip Thakore, the debonair Managing Editor of **Business India,** is a man of some experience, and has some very definite views on the subject of women.

"She must have a sence of humour. She must be cheerful since I am irritable. She must be unconventional in attitudes and dress and other matters.

"One expects her to be aware or what's happening in the environment. She must have a desire to improve herself; to assume the leadership role.

"There should be social awareness between man and woman, husband and wife." This barrister-turned-journalist feels, "You must have discussions and arguments, because arguments help to crystallize your thoughts in a precise manner."

A little less intensely he said. "She must have a healthy attitude towards sex."

My next subject was **P. S. Ramakrishna,** a 78-year-old grandfather.

"I had never spoken to a woman before marriage. But ideas have changed. My views on women have changed. I am moving with the times," and he flashed a wide smile.

"Of course, I allowed my daughter to sing and appear on stage. My mother had great objection to it.

"When my marriage had been arranged, I was asked to go and approve of the girl. But I didn't even look at her at our first meeting. I listened to her playing Carnatic music on the harmonium, and I agreed to the marriage. For one year after the marriage also I didn't meet her at all. I expected nothing from her. She prepared food for me, and that was enough.

"In the early days of our marriage we had no arguments. I used to ask her to come out with me, but she would argue that it wasn't proper. And I would tell her not to hold that view."

Did you find your wife too dependent on you? "We never thought of anything different."

Bhagoji Gopal Chauhan is a twice-married 62-year-old, who operates a lift in a Peddar Road flat. Between his Marathi and my Hindi, I managed to discover that he has a wife in Mahableshwar, and another, Shanta Bai, in Bombay. His was a child marriage the first time. But she didn't conceive for the first five or six years. So his parents got him married a second time. "This is allowed," he assured me. But the hand of providence intervened and both wives got pregnant at the same time. "I love both," he said.

Chauhan expects his women to manage him and look after him. "While I am physically fit, I'll support them. But when I am unable to do that then I'll prefer the woman who can support me.

"My daughters are educated till the 7th, 8th and 10th class. But I won't allow them to marry out of caste. What will society say? They won't let me live. I won't send them to office to work either, because again society will say 'you are living off their earnings.' "

But what about Shanta Bai? She works. "Yes," said Chauhan, "but I don't send her to work in other buildings or houses. Only where I work. She is allowed to work only with me," he said.

— If we had no faults we should not find so much enjoyment in seeing faults in others.

— We are never so ridiculous through qualites we have as through those we pretend to have.

LA ROCHEFOUCAULD

There are three things men will never admit to: that they gossip, that they are as preoccupied with looks as women, and that they have a constant fear of sexual inadequacy. All grow out of the realization that man — the average man, and that includes most of us men — is as insignificant as a pebble on the seashore. He cannot comprehend the vastness of the sea, the infinite freedom of the sky — even the occasional approaching boot that will grind him deeper into the sand. So he looks for the ant or the worm to tower above, to despise and criticize, and puffs out his chest to face the exhausted wavelet that breaks to pass by him. Man — rooted in mind and body (he calls it consistency and fidelity), moved occasionally by external forces beyond his understanding (he calls it Fate or Destiny).

THE GOSSIPOSTURING OF MEN

Man is forever striking a pose, looking over the shoulder for applause and admiration, especially from Woman. More often than not, the admiration is only in the eyes of the Image in the mirror. Over the shoulder, he fears, he is hearing sniggers. In his frustration he verbalizes his imaginary adventures, and the misadventures of others, i.e., he gossips. DILIP RAOTE collects a sackful of stones and mercilessly batters the Image. The last word, the ultimate chuckle, he says, is Eve's

The average man's life is a constant reminder of his nothingness. Though he realizes this, he cannot accept it. For acceptance would mean death. He needs something to live by, to sustain him; he needs to **enhance** his physicality in order to suppress the frightening metaphysical. He creates an Image. Life then takes on a comprehensible meaning, a purpose: to try to live up to the Image. But the sea and winds of Fate make continual encroachments; the Image is shattered, the splinters put together again, until with time the splinters become smaller and smaller and more difficult to put together. At last, man gives up; he retires. He has now no Image to maintain, no prospect of refurbishing it in future. So he talks of the glorious past, of the good old days, of how bravely he stood up to the battering of Fate. In short, he becomes a bore; he is reminding others that they too will be in a similar situation soon. The young nothing who has become an old nothing has time to think of his life-long frustrations and yet wonder why the young do not listen or pay respect to a 'wise' old man.

This 'nothingness' is important. The knowledge of his nothingness — to whatever level of the subconscious it is suppressed — guides, indirectly, all the actions of the average man. Because, as I said earlier, out of this grows his need for an Image, and his efforts to live up to that Image, and his meanness, his pettiness, his viciousness, his malice when his Image is, or he thinks it is, threatened.

This Image-building begins

from childhood, when the adults pass on their hopes and fears to the child — hopes that he will break the family wheel of nothingness; fears that he may not. He is egged on to 'achievement, to constantly compete. Rewarded, or fawned over, when he succeeds; punished, or frowned upon, when he fails. He is ever being asked by adults what he wants to be when he grows up. Even the toys he is given reflect the hopes of the adults — toy guns (soldier), building blocks, mechano sets (architect, engineer), monopoly games (businessman). And cars, aeroplanes (status), cricket sets, footballs (robust manliness). He is told tales of brave princes, of valiant kings, of paupers who became princes, of pirates and buccaneers. With invariably a beautiful, fair maiden and a kingdom to be won as the ultimate prizes. The crises in the lives of these figures are physical, rarely moral. If there is a moral, it is very simplistic — of the triumph of 'good' over 'evil'.

He is provided the ingredients on which to fantasize and the toys to enact the fantasies. The boy is urged to grow up into a strong, successful man. And to the already-fantasizing boy the virtues of Man seem to be looks, strength, valour and status. He even sees their validity in the filmi Amitabh or Dharmendra or Charles Bronson (Chaplin is to laugh at, Bronson to imitate). The boy has already begun to create an Image of himself. He can already hear the clang of the bells of glory. The multi-million-dolorous life beckons.

The basis for the gossip has been laid!

The boy's adolescence and adulthood are a pursuit of his Image, and the rankling failure to live up to it. He goes to college, passes, takes up a job, rises by seniority, marries, begets children, retires. He begins alone with unique, private dreams and hopes and in their enactment ends up like almost everyone else. He dresses like everyone else — almost; lives like everyone else — almost; behaves like everyone else — almost; dreams like everyone else — almost. And **discusses** the little variations in others, i.e., he gossips.

The dream charge on a wild steed becomes the train or bus ride to office. The buccaneer's bounty becomes the monthly pay-packet and the annual bonus. The kingdom to acquire becomes the two-room-kitchen flat in a crowded suburb. The dragon to kill to rescue the fair damsel becomes the cockroach or rat that has sent the wife up a table. And the fair, beautiful, meek, worshipful maiden has become the 'arranged' wife who is not only stronger than him, but who also sets up the status goals, beyond reach, for him.

What can such a man do but talk out his frustrations? Find excuses for his failures, i.e., find scapegoats? Success in others, then, is not the result of merit, but of pull, push, or, in a woman, worse. If a colleague wears expensive clothes and otherwise seems to live well, he must be running a racket. If a girl is outgoing, makes friends easily, she must be chalu. If A takes Miss B out for tea or a film, they must be having an 'affair'. Every 'deviation' is pounced upon and discussed, analysed, magnified, and a moral arrived at.

There is nothing more satisfying than a moral. It bolsters sagging confidence and enables one to feel 'morally' superior. When everything else is taken away from man, he is left with morality, like Pandora's box, which is left with only 'hope' while all other gifts have flown away. So the average man rides morality hard.

The clerk who takes a bribe of twenty rupees can hope to shock others like him by 'inside' stories of the corruption of his boss who demands and gets a crate of whisky and two per cent of the deal. The accountant who has pushed his moronic nephew into the purchase department can still thunder about the nepotism and corruption of Mrs. Gandhi. The grim Puritan and wife in England who copulated — for procreation only — fully dressed in rough clothes with appropriate holes in them could despise the couple who made love in the nude and 'enjoyed' it.

There is nothing like the feeling of moral superiority, no better attitude for a gossip session. Gossip is malice with a moral.

But why should men gossip when they come together? Why can't they discuss something else?

Like what?

They read the same kind of mass circulation newspapers and newsmagazines, the same kind of books, see the same kind of films, have the same kind of fears, dream the same kind of dreams. And their critcal evaluation is succintly minimal — "Damn good, yaar!" or "It's bullshit!" or "Horrible!" Beyond that, nothing.

To them history is historical novels and newspaper accounts; politics is the deeds and misdeeds of politicians; economics is the balancing of the home budget; biology is the next copulation act, hopefully with someone other than the wife; wisdom is the newspaper editorial; culture is the latest 'hit' film or play; grace is Hema Malini's walk on the screen; taste is the [illegible] preaching from the adman's pulp-pit; tragedy is a man slipping on a banana peel, i.e., the deflation of an Image; and daring, the pinching of a helpless girl's bottom in a crowded train.

With this common man's **reductio ad absurdum** of everything that is of meaning to mankind, are there any meaningful issues left for him to discuss? Can he do anything else but gossip.

And so the whispering groups in office canteens, the noisy attitudinizing ones in trains, and the coarse, bawdy ones in hotels and restaurants and at street-corners. Gossiping in the train to office, gossiping over tea in the office, gossiping in the company of friends in the evening, and in the night boring the wife to death with a resume.

Gossip, we have seen, is the outcome of frustration. And the most corroding frustration is in the area of sex. This frustration begins with puberty and the boy's realization of his need for woman. In adolescence he is too shy and afraid of teasing to approach a girl. Hence the sniffing at sex, the fantasizing, the masturbation, and the consequent fears and conflicts that self- abuse generates. With curiosity, fears, etc., comes the need for more information, for assurance, the comparing of sizes, the mental stripping. Follows bragging, showing off, the desire to make a conquest, to impress girls, the preoccupation with looks, the flexing of muscles, the exposed chests, the line-maroing — and through it all the furtive gossip.

The Image is polished and repolished, yet it is fragile enough to splinter even with the fear of rejection. Life becomes an all-important issue of tit or twat.

The young man is in search of a conquest, his one great passionate love affair. Oh yes, he believes, despite his lurid sex fantasies, in romantic LOVE and love marriage. He has been conditioned to, having been brought up in childhood on tales of princes and princesses who love and marry and live happily ever after, and later on, on the exploits of filmi heroes who harass and tease heroines who ultimately fall in their arms. The timid young man tries out variations of the filmi tactics — like street-cornering — and is berated by the very elders — and girls — who applauded the much more vulgar antics of the filmi heroes. He takes out his frustration in petty attempts at flirtation, and he gossips with other young men.

Love, unfortunately, seldom comes his way. Finally, his parents arrange his mariage. The Image is splintered! Years later he still squirms if asked whether his marriage was 'love' or 'arranged'. "It was a litle of both. I saw and approved the girl and our parents fixed the marriage." The Image refurbished! There is in this also an implied nuance that he did his duty by his parents. (Explicitly, "What to do? They were after me to get married.")

But the 'happily married man has not lost his fantasies. In fact, they are more frequent and more lurid. The wife, he suspects, secretly despises him. He has somehow let her down; at least he feels he has. Also, the wife has seen the 'real' him, and is possibly amused by his Image.

THE GOSSIPOSTURING OF MEN

He needs a conquest outside his home to assuage his hurt ego, to prop up his Image. He can't. To risk an outdoor adventure needs the courage he never had, also money. Hence the sly hints about the girls in his office, the mysterious smile when he comes home late, the ostentatiously secretive tearing up of a bus ticket as if it were a love-note. If not a love affair to get the attention of his wife, then tales of how important he is at the office and how he has to suffer incompetent colleagues and a nincompoop boss. Poor chap, seeking applause for heroics in a non-heroic existence. Having gossiped in the office, he has to gossip at home too.

In the office he mentally strips the girls and verbally their character, competence, antecedents, intelligence. Plays footsie with a girl who may not even be aware of it and later gloats in the company of friends over his exploit.

I remember the manager of a circulating library in my childhood days who whenever I entered the shop would ask me to smell the back of his hand. When I had sniffed and looked puzzled he would exclaim: "Chha, you have no taste. This" — he would hold up the hand reverentially — "has just touched the backside of. . ." He would name some voluptuous girl in the village. Even in those pre-puberty days I suppose I envied him, since we played the game for many years until the library closed down, He also had a huge store of dirty jokes and accounts of his sexploits. All mythical, as I learnt later. since until he married several years after the library days he was a virgin. Everything he said had a sexual nuance to it. His imagery, his similes, metaphors, aphorisms were all sexual. He was the Khushwant Singh or I. S. Johar of our village.

Sex gossip is of course an industry today — providing twits and boobs with titillation through programmed fantasies. Saliva drips at one end, something else rises at the other, and the dreams get screwed. It is a mass orgasm of reassurance. Casanova and Sade become ideals, and 'lecher' is accepted as a compliment.

So men gossip, average men. By average I mean 'not noble'. And by noble I mean as defined by Nietschze or Marcus Aurelius or Jesus or Gandhi or Vivekananda.

How many does that exclude? One in a thousand? One in a million? Men can't give an answer to that. To answer would be to admit their nothingness. Women know, and so far they had maintained a diplomatic silence.

Which is why it is surprising that young women today should thunder against gossiping by men, indignantly claim that men gossip more than women do. They should sit back and chuckle and watch man make a fool of himself. It comes easy to him.

THIS WEEK FOR YOU

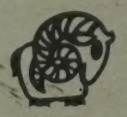
FOR THE WEEK MAY 13 — 19, 1979.

John Naylor

IF YOUR BIRTHDAY'S THIS WEEK:

You'll be on the move mentally and physically during the coming year. You might gradually begin to realise just where your new path will take you, probably from happenings in the lives of the people around you. The new and novel will attract you — and will tend to be lucky to you 1979/80, so don't let yourself drift back to the past in any way in late 1979. Money prospects are very much better than they were last year and you should have more vitality; relationships will be more harmonious. A rather sparkling year, socially. The immediate future — mid-May to late June — is very favourable for health and beauty matters also for romance.

ARIES



(Mar 22 — Apr 20)

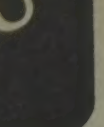
Get around and let yourself accept a minor challenge — it could lead on to further opportunities. Bear in mind that the first half of the week is the best for almost anything. Life will be more tranquil from now on; there'll be extra money soon.

TAURUS

(Apr 21 — May 21)

A fortunate week. Push your luck and your personality and don't be afraid to change your mind if you feel, on Wednesday particularly, that it is the right thing to do. The next few weeks very much favour romance and social life.

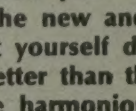
GEMINI



(May 22 — June 21)

Get yourself together and up to date — you soon enter a busy, and lucky, phase. Good news comes through the mail or from a relative. If heart-free, romance is just around the corner. Health and beauty matters are well starred this week.

CANCER



(June 22 — July 23)

A shifting of several planets now puts most of the emphasis on friendships and the lighter side of life. You will be working out expansive plans for the future and there is every indication that these will succeed.

LEO

(July 24 — Aug 23)

Your special hopes and wishes are highlighted and it should be a decisive week for your personal life. You could be making — or breaking — a friendship or finishing up one activity and starting another.

VIRGO

(Aug 24 — Sept 23)

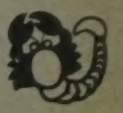
A romance is on the way, if lonesome. Get into fresh scenes and activities. Travel stars are strong and favourable, could mean a pleasure trip or a family visit. A legal matter, hanging fire, will move ahead soon.

LIBRA

(Sept 24 — Oct 23)

If a typical Libran, conditions, lately, have frustrated your plans. This week sees problems disappearing rapidly and relationships becoming harmonious again. A new heart interest is on the way, if single.

SCORPIO



(Oct 24 — Nov 22)

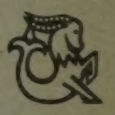
Be prepared to fit in with the ideas and arrangements of companions for the next few weeks. This way, life will be easier to handle. Anyway, others have the better ideas at present. Life will be strenuous, but find time for relaxation.

SAGITTARIUS

(Nov 23 — Dec 22)

An enjoyable week, but curb your generous impulses or you'll be short of money just when you need it a little later on. Yet, someone could spoil you with a special gift and there are some enjoyable outings being planned for the future. Think carefully before taking on a fresh responsibility.

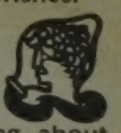
CAPRICORN



(Dec 23 — Jan 20)

A good turn done recently will bring reward and a super invitation will take you by surprise. The Moon in your sign, plus other favourable aspects, could make this a special time for your personal hopes and wishes.

AQUARIUS



(Jan 21 — Feb 19)

You will have that special something about you, so you can chance your luck a bit. Not in money matters, too much, however; these need care for some months. Home life is well starred. Try not to offend a senior person on Thursday — it will rebound upon you.

PISCES

(Feb 20 — Mar 21)

Take a fresh look at any area of your activities where things are dragging a bit and consider a fresh approach. Keep on the move whenever you can — for enjoyment and for luck. Whatever you do, don't try to cling to the past.

Beautiful ways to beat the heat

Whatever your need, whatever your taste or your budget, Orient can offer more of what you want. More of quality, more of beauty more of value, and more of choice—the widest selection ever ! Designed and built with care by experts with a proven record of competence, every fan is backed by the Orient symbol of excellence : to work well, to work longer.

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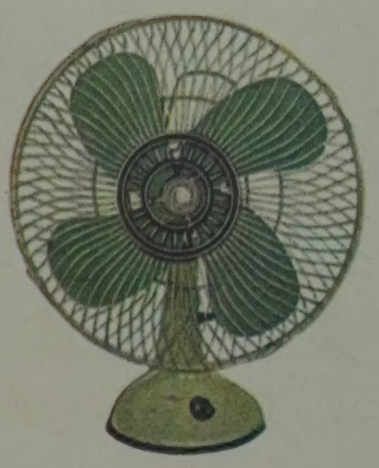
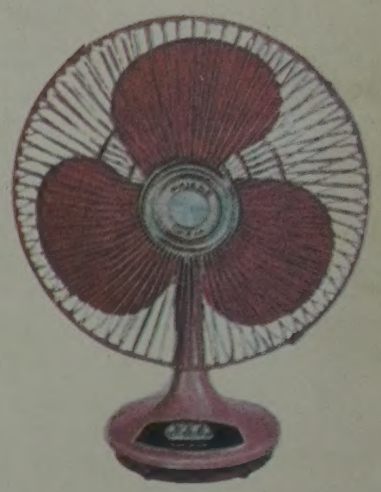
ORIENT FANS

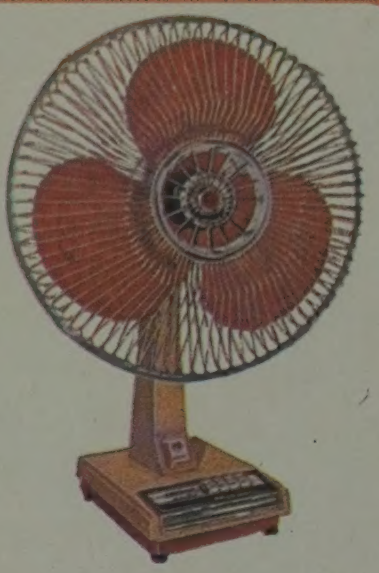
4 Ceiling Fans • 6 Table Fans • 2 Pedestal Fans



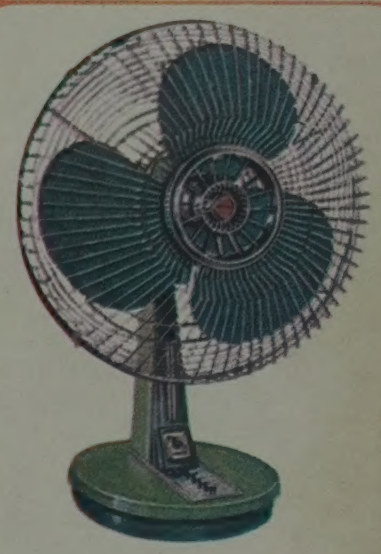
Deluxe



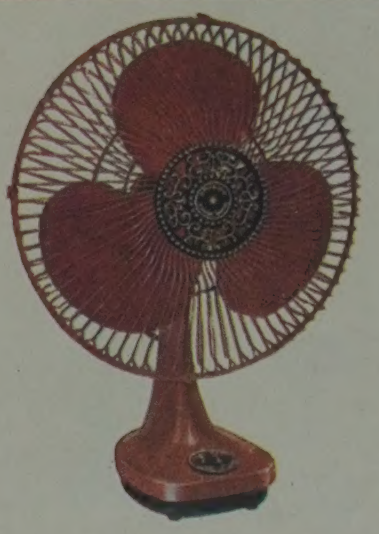
Super Deluxe



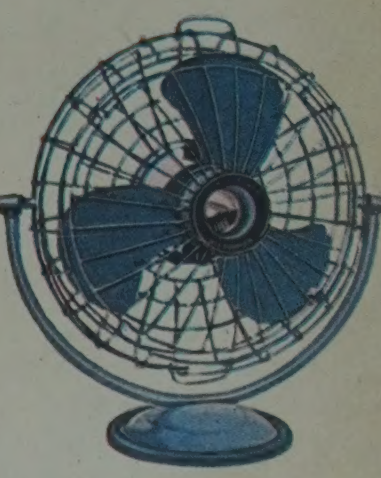
Desk



Super Desk



Summer Queen



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